The World Within

Rufus M. Jones

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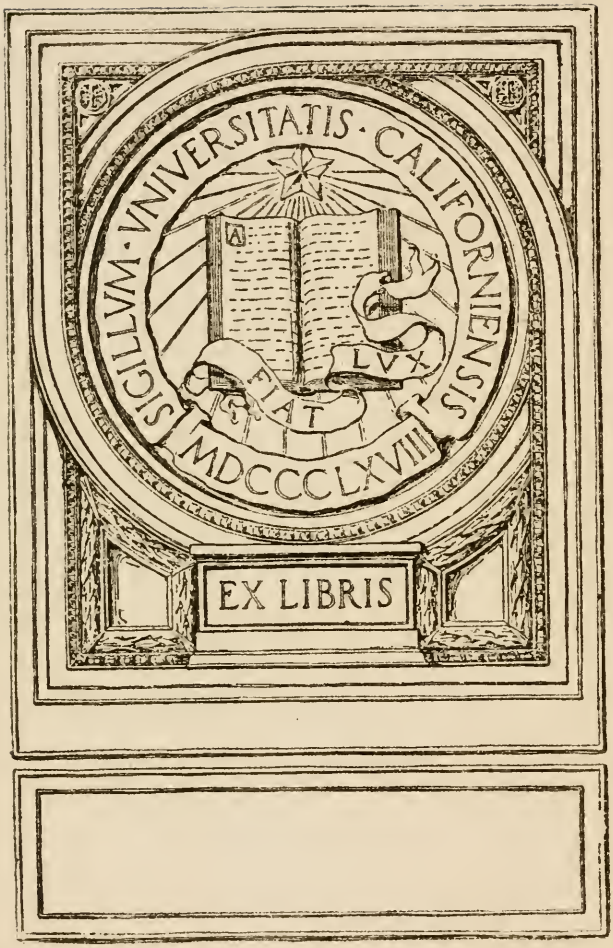
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THE WORLD WITHIN

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THE WORLD WITHIN

BY

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Author of "The Inner Life," etc.

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PREFACE

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INTRODUCTION

There is a fine passage in one of Keats's Letters in which the poet says that our world is created primarily as a place for making souls — in his phrase it is " a vale of soul-making."

We are just now so absorbed with external tasks and so occupied with the solution of problems in our outside world that most of us hardly have time to consider whether we have any souls or not. We allow that question to await its turn for an answer. But there are some questions — and this is precisely one of them — which cannot be postponed while outer issues are being settled. In fact all outer issues are intricately tied up with just this inner one. It turns out to be forever true that the inner aspect which we call *morale* is the main factor even in contests which are supposed to be only external. Those impalpable things which we name *faith* and *vision* and *spirit* and *nerve* are greater elements in the determination even of outside victories than are miraculous long-distance guns. The conviction that our fun-

damental aims are righteous is an unspeakable asset. Moreover, it appears as clearly evident now as it was two thousand years ago in Syria that it is of no use or profit to win the whole world if the inner life and self-respect are lost in the process; that houses and lands, territory and spheres of influence, are a poor substitute for that intangible thing which we call the *soul.*

Some day, near or remote, this war will be over. These unparalleled armies will demobilize and these multitudes of young men who have been living under most unwonted human conditions and have been facing death every day in appalling shapes will return to the pursuits which they have intermitted for this vast business of Armageddon. The new tasks of reorganization, rehabilitation and reconstruction awaiting them and us will be fully as unparalleled as the modes and magnitude of the warfare have been. And beyond any question the most important preparation for this immense work of rebuilding the wrecked and shattered world will be the clarification and fortification of the soul. There will be, no doubt, enormous economic issues to be settled. We shall be confronted with a wholly novel group of political problems. It will be a world charged with unusual dynamic social aspirations which must be

dealt with. But still deeper than all other issues will be the issues of the soul.

We cannot build this new world of ours out of material stuff alone. It will not be a matter solely of iron and coal and foodstuffs. It will, as always, be a matter of creative faith, of spiritual vision — in a word, the ultimate issue will turn upon the quality and character of the *soul* of those of us who are to do the building. We must be on our guard against low and miserable material aims which would put the holiest hopes of our age again in imminent peril. We must restore trust and confidence in a living God who is not off beyond and above the storm and stress of life, but in the very pulse and flow of it all, and whose *will for a good world* is the deepest reality of our universe. We shall certainly care less than we once did for non-essentials in religion, for the external counters, for the time-worn survivals of bitter controversies, but we shall, if we are wise, care more than ever for the central realities by which men live. St. Augustine was right when he said: "My life shall now be a real life, being wholly full of Thee." Variations in external matters will become — are already becoming — unimportant and negligible. The things which form and fashion the soul and set it on "the path

to that which is Best " will be the abiding things and the only ones of any permanent value for vital religion.

We do not want a religion which meets the needs of experts alone and moves in a region beyond the reach of common men and women who have no taste for the intricacies of theology. If religion is, as I profoundly believe, the essential way to the full realization of life, we, who claim to know about it, ought to interpret it so that its meaning stands out plain and clear to those who most need it to live by. I have always believed and maintained that the apparent lack of popular interest in it is largely due to the awkward and blundering way in which it has been presented to the mind and heart of those who all the time carry deep within themselves inner hungers and thirsts which nothing but God can satisfy. I do not want to write or print a line which does not at least bear the mark and seal of reality — and which will not make some genuine *fact of life* more plain and sure.

The struggle for a conquering inner faith has in these strenuous days been laid upon us all. The easy, inherited, second-hand faith will not do for any of us now. We cannot stand the stern issues of life and death with any feeble, formal

creed. We demand something real enough and deep enough to answer the human cry of our soul to-day. We need to be assured that we do not in the last resort fall back on the play of molecules but that underneath us are everlasting Arms. We want to know not only that there is law and order but that a genuine Heart of Love touches our heart and brings us calm and confidence.

Robert Louis Stevenson has somewhere told of an experience that happened once to his grandfather. He was on a vessel that was caught by a terrific storm and was carried irresistibly toward a rocky shore where complete destruction was imminent. When the storm and danger were at the height he crept up on deck to look around and face the worst. He saw the pilot lashed to the wheel, with all his might and nerve holding the vessel off the rocks and steering it inch by inch into safer water. While he stood watching, the pilot looked up at him and smiled. It was little enough but it completely reassured him. He went back to his room below with new confidence, saying to himself, "We shall come through; I saw the pilot smile!" If we could only in some way catch sight of a smile on the face of the great Pilot in this strange rough sea in which we are sailing, we, too, could do our work and carry our

burdens with confidence, perhaps with joy. I wish this little book might help some readers to be convinced that even in the dark and the storm there is a smile of hope and victory on the Pilot's face and that He is saying as the great Galilean said: "Be of good cheer, I am winning the victory over the world."

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THE WORLD WITHIN

CHAPTER I

THE DEEPER UNIVERSE

I

WHERE LOVE BREAKS THROUGH

We do well to make strenuous exertions to meet the threatening food-famine and to cultivate efficiently all the acres that are available for increasing the food-supply of the world. But there is another kind of famine which is threatening and ominous, and which has not yet received anything like adequate attention. I mean the spiritual famine of our stricken world. Multitudes of men are daily facing danger and death. Vast numbers are weighted with loss, suffering and agony. The deeper problems of life rest heavily upon all of us. The old religious phrases are inadequate. Human hearts everywhere are longing for fresh and vital assurance that in this time of the world's greatest spiritual need the everlasting Arms of divine love are underneath us, and that one like

unto the Son of Man is walking with us in the midst of the fire. Where shall we look for this assurance?

We know much more about the universe than the ancient world knew, but the more we know about it the harder it becomes for our spirits to accept the visible universe as the ultimate and final reality. The cold and pitiless forces of nature are not less cold and pitiless when we succeed in discovering their laws and habits. One comes back from his study of the march of suns, and planets, and the spiral movements of world-making nebulæ with very little to comfort the longings of the heart. He sees that these curves are all irrevocable and inevitable and that each event unfolds out of the one which preceded. It is a wonderful and amazing system, but it offers no tenderness, no love, no balm for the wounds of the spirit. It rolls mercilessly on, and he may be thankful if its wheels do not ride over him — the midget of an hour, riding on one of the flying globes of this mechanical system.

It is useless to expect tenderness and love and balm in a system of mechanical forces. That kind of world can reveal gravitation and electricity, attraction and repulsion; it can show us matter moving under law; it can exhibit the transforma-

tion of one form of energy into some other form; but from the nature of the case it cannot manifest a heart of tenderness or a spirit of love. Those traits belong only to a person, and a mechanical system can never reveal a person. Physics and chemistry, geology and astronomy do discover a revelation of God, but it is necessarily a revelation limited to the possibilities of their field. The test-tube and the air-pump help to demonstrate the fact that the universe is a realm of purpose, of order, and of inexhaustible energy, but they must not be expected to show us a divine face or a heart of love. God puts no more of himself into chemistry or physics or astronomy than chemistry or physics or astronomy will hold!

Even this external universe with its law and order, its forces and energies, can not be as cold and pitiless as it appears when it is mistakenly sundered and cut away from the deeper and more spiritual reality working endlessly through it and forever preparing for a higher stage to succeed and transcend a lower stage. Physical nature is always more than the bare mechanical fragment with which the descriptive sciences deal. "That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." Our life can not be completely sundered from the

physical universe. We are in some way organic with it and of it, and the God we seek can show at least some aspects of himself through it. He uses it steadily toward spiritual ends, though under obvious limits. It is a realm of mighty moral discipline and, fragment though it is by itself, it points all serious souls to the larger whole, the completer reality which supplements and fulfills it.

If the universe is deeper than physics and astronomy can reveal, if there is some greater reality than can be expressed in terms of energy and law, how could this deeper reality reveal itself? Where could the veil be lifted? Such a revelation could be made to humanity only through a person. Mountain peaks and stars can not embody love and sympathy — they can embody only energy. Love and sympathy, tenderness and patience, forgiveness and grace are traits of character, attitudes of a personal spirit. If they are ever to be revealed, they must be revealed in the life of a person.

Now, once there was a Person who felt that his life was a genuine exhibition of the divine in the human, the eternal in the midst of time. He lived and died in the consciousness that through his life he was showing God to men; that his love

was a revelation of the real nature and character of God; that his sympathy for the weary, heavy-laden, sin-distressed, heart-hungry people of the earth was a true unveiling of the heart of the universe; that his suffering over sin, his grace and patience made the Father's character visible and vocal in the world. He felt this, and consecrated his life to this deeper revelation of God. Some have doubted and some have been perplexed, but there have always been some — and it is a growing number — who profoundly believe that here in him is the personal character of God revealed to us. However leaden and pitiless the march of the universe may be at other points, at this one point, at least, love and tenderness break through and enwrap us. This God who is unveiled in Christ is the God our world needs to-day. Not a God of abstract metaphysics, not a God apart in solitary bliss and perfection, but the God and Father of Jesus Christ, revealing himself to us in the closest intimacy of fellowship with us, and suffering like ourselves in the travail and tragedy of the world's suffering —" A God who lives in the perpetual giving of himself." The Jesus whom Peter confessed and Mary loved can become the Christ of the world, and through him can come afresh to us the God whom our chemistry and astronomy were

too limited to reveal — we can see him in the face of Jesus Christ.

II

UNSEEN AND INTANGIBLE REALITIES

"That which is not brings to naught that which is."

St. Paul's saying is not quite a paradox. It is rather a vivid and forceful way of saying what he often says, namely, that unseen and intangible realities build and shape the things we see. Indiscernibles are mighty factors. An invisible world is behind and within the visible one. We recognize this truth now in a multitude of ways. In the fine peroration of his great message on "The Leadership of Educated Men"— given at Brown University in 1882 — George William Curtis very impressively referred to the invisible force of gravitation which holds the world together and controls all its movements. He said:

"In the cloudless midsummer sky serenely shines the moon, while the tumultuous ocean rolls and murmurs beneath, the type of illimitable and unbridled power; but resistlessly marshaled by celestial laws all the wild waters, heaving from pole to pole, rise and recede obedient to that mild queen of heaven."

We have slowly come to realize, as science has piled up its inferences and conclusions, that our

visible world is only a fragment of a larger universe and swims in a vast invisible world which has no known or conceivable bounds. Out of this inexhaustible sea of energy come the forces which build our visible world — forces which we name and use but do not understand. Gravitation, cohesion, attraction, magnetism, electricity, molecular energy, ether-waves are a few of the words which stand for mighty forces. We say the words and look wise, as though our finger were on a secret. We know, however, no more about the real nature of these forces which build our world than Aladdin knew about the jinnee that reared his palace when he rubbed his lamp. We know little more than that the visible comes out of the invisible, and that we can learn how these invisible forces work and how to direct them for our practical ends.

Everywhere and always the invisible is the builder of the visible. Michelangelo saw the dome of St. Peter's in the viewless realm of his own soul before he raised it into visible beauty above the groined arches of the cathedral. Every creation of art is an instance of the same truth. The form of beauty which comes forth into visible shape for the many to see and admire has first been an inner possession, growing into perfection

in the spaceless soul of the creator, where only one could see it.

Plotinus used to hold that it is much truer to say that the body is in the soul than that the soul is in the body. And strange as it may sound, there is much to be said for this view of the ancient Greek philosopher. There are many good evidences to prove that some invisible reality — which we may just as well call soul as anything else, at least until we get a word that means more — that some invisible reality builds and vivifies and directs this visible, corporeal bulk of ours. There is, for example, a tiny speech-center in the left hemisphere of the human brain, so complicated that all the telegraphic instruments in the United States, combined and worked from one central key, would make a very simple instrument compared with it. When a baby arrives here on his hazardous venture his speech-center is not yet organized. Even if he knew all the wonders of the world he has left behind he could tell nothing about it — any more than Beethoven could have rendered a symphony without musical instruments. It looks as though the expanding mind of the child slowly organized and builded this marvelous center, which was only fleshy pulp before the organization was wrought

out in it. There is, at any rate, no way to account in terms of matter for the transcendent meanings which burst into consciousness at the sound of words, nor for the way in which conscious effort and attentive purpose build the little bridges between the cells of the brain and make of it an instrument for the spirit.

We are, once more, all familiar with the way an invisible ideal holds and controls and dominates and constructs a life. It is one of the most notable features of our strange human experience. That which is not yet — for an ideal plainly is what ought to be but is not — works like a mighty energy. It upholds the spirit in hours of defeat. It makes one oblivious to pain. It conquers all opposition. It carries the will, contrary to all laws of mechanics, along the line of greatest resistance. It turns obstacles and hindrances into chariots of victory. It does the impossible. In Paul's great words, "the things which are not bring to naught the things which are!" What cannon of unwonted caliber, pounding at the battle-lines of men, can not do, the impalpable ideas and ideals of the common people may after all accomplish. Dreams and visions and hopes are not so empty and useless as they often seem.

Suddenly they find a potent voice, they grow mighty, they gather volume, and they do what cannon could not do.

"One man with a dream, at pleasure
Shall go forth and conquer a crown;
And three with a new song's measure
Can trample a kingdom down.

"We, in the ages lying
In the buried past of the earth,
Built Nineveh with our sighing
And Babel itself with our mirth;

"And o'erthrew them with prophesying
To the old of the new world's worth;
For each age is a dream that is dying
Or one that is coming to birth." [1]

The religious books of ancient Persia say that when the soul of a good man arrives at the river of death a beautiful, shining, radiant figure meets it and says to it: "I am your true self, your best self, your real self. I am the image of your ideals, your strivings, your resolves, your determined purposes. I am you. Henceforth we merge together into one harmonious life." The parable is a genuine one. We are forever what our ideals make us.

[1] *The Dreamers* by Arthur William O'Shaughnessy.

But deeper and surer than all other invisible realities is that divine Spirit, not seen, but felt, who is the ground of our real being, the source of our longings, the inspirer of our larger hopes, the inner energy by which we live. Some persons think he must be dead or asleep or on a journey. They see such stalking evils, such collapses of civilization, such ugly shadows over the fair world, that they cannot hold their thin clew of faith any longer. It has snapped and left them standing alone in their dark cave. But he is there all the same, though they see him not nor know him. He does not vanish in the dark or in the storm. There is much love working still in these hard, dark days. Grace abounds, often unsuspected, even though sin seems so potent. Courage and heroism never broke through and showed their greatness more clearly than now. Sacrifice, which is woven in the same warp with love, is moving like a radiant light everywhere through the storm. Faith in something still holds men and women to their hard tasks of endurance. All that Christ was and is still attracts the soul that sees it. If an eclipse dims or veils the sight of him for the moment, we may be sure that this warm, healing Sun of our life has not set. He is still there, and some of us continue to feel our

hearts burn with his presence, which is as indubitable a reality as is the rock-ribbed earth upon which we tread. What he needs is better organs to reveal himself through, richer, truer, holier lives to show his love through, more finely organized personalities for his grace to break through into the world. He cannot do his work without us. He cannot preach without our lips, comfort without our help, heal without our hands, carry the truth without our feet, remove the shadow without our faith and effort. The invisible works through the visible, the unseen and eternal operates through little instruments like us!

III

THE WORLD WE FORM WITHIN

We have had many illustrations in these solemn months of the momentous character of responsible decisions. Many lives hang upon one man's judgment concerning a course of action, and even the fate of a nation is involved in the conclusion to which a single individual arrives. If the responsible man blunders, dire consequences follow; if he is wise, large advantages accrue. National disasters are generally no accidents.

They attach to inadequate planning or to inefficient management of affairs.

What is true of the large outer world is true also — inevitably true — in the smaller inner world which the schoolmen used to call the microcosm, that is, in the soul of man. Here also a person blunders at his peril. Here, too, consequences attach to decisions and deeds, and the quality of the reaping is determined by the character of the sowing. This is a profound and fundamental feature of Christ's teaching. Always and everywhere in his message the beyond is within, destiny is bound up with inner attitudes, with heart and mind and will. The secret of heaven and hell has not yet been fully explored. We have added little, in these later years of excessive question-asking, to our scanty knowledge of the regions beyond the margin of this life. "We should listen," as a wise man has told us, "on our knees to any one who by stricter obedience had brought his thoughts into parallelism with celestial currents and could hint to human ears the scenery and circumstances of the newly parted soul."

But while our ignorance about the Great Beyond is still as vast as that of Europe was about the western hemisphere before Columbus sailed

in the *Pinta,* we have been making steady progress in our explorations of this inner world of ours — this microcosm. We know much about that viewless realm we call the soul. And the mor we know about it the more wonderful do the words of Christ appear concerning this strange world within. John was surely right when he said, " He knew what was in man! "

One of the most fruitful of all our modern discoveries is that which for the want of a better term we call the " subconscious," the submerged life below the threshold of consciousness. Some wild things have been said and written about this inside underworld, and the abnormal phenomena of the subliminal have perhaps come too much to the front, but the fact remains that the normal processes of the world below the threshold are as important for the microcosm as the battlefields of Europe are for the great world. It is in here that destiny is settled and the hereafter is built.

We all begin life with certain instinctive functions which are admirably adapted to ends. These instincts carry the tiny individual unerringly forward. They build his future and make his wider career possible. How he got them and came by them he never asks. They are so much a part of himself that he never thinks to investi-

gate the mystery. It turns out, however, that they are the inherited deposit of racial experience and habit, the contribution of practical wisdom which the immemorial past makes to the present. The slow gains of the ages are woven into the fiber of the newcomer and he pushes safely out for his venturous voyage on the accumulated inheritance which was piled up before he arrived.

Not less momentous and important are the accumulations of his own growing emotions and thoughts and decisions. He is forever weaving, for better or for worse, the indestructible stuff of his inner subconscious life, which, at a later time, without any thought about it on his part, will steer and direct him as certainly as his inherited instincts did in the baby stage. Every effort of will, every struggle of attention, every battle with temptation leaves its slender trace in the structure of the subconscious world which he is building, and it will be heard from again in some day of crisis or in some emergency of action. Nothing is lost, nothing is uncounted, nothing is negligible. The tiny becomes big with importance and the indiscernibly little grows into the immense. Every feat of skill is the product of patient practice, every case of unerring judgment has behind it a multitude of careful decisions,

every revelation of grace in manner or disposition is the slow fruit of pains and effort. The saint is no accidental mutation. Moral dexterity of soul and beauty of character are the result of human effort and of coöperation with God, as surely as physical health is the result of correspondence with the conditions of life.

An ancient psalmist prayed for truth in his inward parts. It is a beautiful aspiration. But the way to get truth in the inward parts is to practice truth-telling as an unvarying habit. If one tells the truth and thinks the truth yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow, hates falsehood, abhors lying, and sincerely conforms to reality — he need not worry about the outcome. Truth is thus woven into the structure of the soul. The subconscious life is builded toward truth-telling and truth-living, and the inward self inclines to truth as streams flow to the sea. It is no accident that at last when Christ's servants see his face his name shall be on their foreheads. There is no caprice about that; for, after all, the heavenly life is the life formed by the transformation of our poor, feeble, limited, imperfect, sin-defiled selves into something approaching a likeness of that holy, perfect life of his. How it comes we cannot altogether tell. There are mystery and miracle in it. But

it does not " come " without our coöperation. It is not thrust upon us without our choice and decision. Here again the weaving of the character and the writing of the name on the forehead are the result of saying " Yes " to God and of patient conformity to eternal laws of life.

CHAPTER II

THE WAY OF FAITH AND LOVE

I

THE CENTRAL ACT OF RELIGION

RELIGION is too rich and complex to be reduced to any one act or attitude or aspect of life. In so far as our religion is real and genuine, it will touch, heighten, and transform every feature of our lives, and, if that is so, we must not expect that we can pick out one feature and say here or nowhere the consummate blossom of religion is to be seen. But there is one act of life which does bring us in a special and peculiar way into the holy of holies of religion — a central act without which any person's religion will always remain dwarfed and unfulfilled. This central act is worship. By worship I mean the act of rising to a personal, experimental consciousness of the real presence of God which floods the soul with joy and bathes the whole inward spirit with refreshing streams of life. Never to have felt that,

never to have opened the life to these incoming divine tides, never to have experienced the joy of personal fellowship with God, is surely to have missed the richest privilege and the highest beatitude of religion. Almost all of our modern forms of Christianity make too little of this central act, and, with some truth, it has been called "the lost art of worship." The main reason for the decline of worship is the excessive desire, so common to-day, to have something always happening or, as we often say, to have something "doing." Hush, waiting, meditation, concentration of spirit, are just the reverse of our busy, driving, modern temper. The person who meditates, we are apt to think, will lose an opportunity to do something; while he muses, the procession will go on and leave him behind. We hear all the time of the vast human tasks that are to be done; we are crowded with practical problems, and some of us are ready to identify religion with service; we would like to turn the church into a soup-house, or at least into an institution for ministering to the wants of the neighborhood.

Another tendency into which we easily fall is that of making religion consist of words, words, words. Talking about God, expounding the experiences of them of old time, saying apt and

lovely things about religion, occupy us much when we come together, and quite rightly so. But to what purpose do we "talk about God" if none of us can pause in our inward rush and find him, actually meet with him and enter into the joy of the Lord? What have we gained by recounting the "experiences" of past ages if nobody now is to have similar experiences? It is melancholy to hear of Bethels in the dim, far past if we are to conclude that that ladder between the soul and God has been pulled up, or pulled down, and that direct divine intercourse has ceased. The apt and lovely words about religion have place and meaning only if they create in us the passion and the positive intention to go ourselves on the spiritual pilgrimage, the goal of which is this holy of holies, where words about God fall away, since we have entered into the joy of his real presence.

In the right place and in the proper degree we may well consider what are the great truths of our religion, what are the structural ideas of our faith, and it is essential that we should work out, and work out intelligently, the ways and means, the plans and methods, of social service — the practical application of our spiritual insight to the society of our time — but in all these matters do not let us make the fatal mistake of supposing that

religion is primarily either words or service. Religion is primarily, and at heart, the personal meeting of the soul with God. If that experience ceases in the world, religion, in its first intention, is doomed. We may still have ideas about the God whom men once knew intimately, and we may still continue to work for human betterment, but there can be living religion only so long as the soul of man is capable of experiencing the fresh bubbling of the living water within and can know for himself that a heart of eternal love beats in the central deeps of the universe within his reach.

To give up the cultivation of worship, then, means in the long run the loss of the central thing in religion; it involves the surrender of the priceless jewel of the soul. In its stead we may perfect many other things; we may make our form of divine service, as we call it, very artistic and very popular; we may speak with the tongues of men and sing with the tongues almost of angels, but if we lose the power to discover and appreciate the real presence of God and if we miss the supreme joy of feeling ourselves environed by the Spirit of the living and present God, we have made a bad exchange and have dropped from a higher to a lower type of religion.

There is no doubt that, as with all the su-

premely great things, the act of worship calls for intense devotion, for unusual concentration, for long-continued spiritual preparation. If it is, as I believe, the very goal and pinnacle of religion — the flowering of the tree of life — then we must not expect that it will cost nothing or that it will be reached along lines of least resistance. Religion has always demanded, for its best things, the absolute price. There is no finding without losing; there is no getting without giving; there is no living without dying. For a few dollars we can get a book on religion; for a few more dollars we can get some one to talk to us about the things of religion; but what we cannot get for dollars, however high we heap them, is this experience which is the heart of religion, this experience of God, this practice of the divine presence, this joy of being ourselves in the holy of holies.

II

FAITH AS A WAY OF LIFE

Some persons think of faith as a mark of weakness. To their minds it is a form, or relic, of superstition — a diet of "milk" to be discarded for the "strong meat" of knowledge as soon as one is full-grown. There are many grown-up

boys and girls who pride themselves on having outgrown the need of this old-fashioned article. "When I was a child," they grandly say, "I thought as a child, but when I reached the age of manhood I put away childish things. I mean to accept nothing now which I cannot know."

That general program, however, turns out to be very absurd. It will not work for a minute. Instead of bringing emancipation, it makes life a poor rope of sand, with no power whatever to it. A little thought and insight would show this person, who is so eager to graduate from his childhood stage, that all his knowledge and all his activities are penetrated through and through with faith. He cannot move a step without it; he cannot even start to think without it. He must trust the evidence of his senses. He must have faith that there is a world which corresponds to his impressions of sight and touch, of taste and smell. He must assume and believe that what is outside and beyond his mind fits what is inside. Who can ever "prove" to him that the world actually is precisely the way it looks? Nobody. That is a mighty venture of faith which we all must make. We must live in the belief that the world outside the mind and inside the mind make together one whole and coherent world.

Science, too, involves faith at every point of its structure. All the tools, the instruments, the machinery of science must be taken as a venture of faith. The greatest tool it uses is the principle of cause — everything in the universe must have a cause and must be explained by its cause. But that universal principle of science never has been "proved," and, from the nature of the case, never can be "proved." It is assumed as a working principle and used on a venture of faith. There is no doubt that it works very well, but it is nevertheless faith applied to science. The "laws" of the universe which science spells out are never seen with the eye or touched with the hand. They are not material "things." They are as invisible and intangible as God himself is. They are in the sphere of faith rather than in the sphere of knowledge. We have no way of "knowing" that the laws of nature will always remain uniform, will always work as they do now, will always be reliable and trustworthy. No amount of experience could ever "prove" that. We make the great venture of faith that it is so and act upon it and it works well, and on the basis of it we predict future events.

Faith is still more evident as a working energy in the practical matters of life. Society could not

exist an hour on a bare "knowledge" basis. All banks would suspend, all laws would become invalid, the world would be turned into a vast insane asylum, each individual living in solitary isolation in the whirl of his own ideas. Marriage and home-building are beautiful instances of faith. No one ever "knows," or can "know," that in the stress of years, in the give and take of life, in the lights and shadows of this world of mutability, the friend of his youthful fancy will grow dearer and truer, more inwardly beautiful and indispensable to him, and that their two individual lives and wills will merge into an indivisible union. Marriage is of necessity a venture of faith, as is friendship of every sort. That does not mean that it is a mere hazard, a blind guess. It too often is so, no doubt, but that is because the persons marrying make a hazard and are not guided by real faith.

Real faith — faith which carries in itself a constructive energy — always builds on solid foundations and can test its building as it builds. Marriage is always a hazard, a chance — to use the current society word, it is "a gamble" — unless the two persons who are to marry have already a sufficient experience of love and friendship with each other to warrant the faith that their intended

future will increase in worth and joy. If marriages are made for money or for beauty or social standing, there is, of course, very little ground for faith in a happy future union which will grow truer and deeper as the years go. But if the two lives have already found each other and are united in common interests, in genuine friendship, in happy personal fellowship; if their love has its roots in moral character and not in surface traits, the step is still a venture of faith, but it is a faith guaranteed and tested by experience. Faith in this case is merely building out upon the solid pillars of experience. It is the power to see and to appreciate and to trust what still remains hidden from us in the life we have already proved. It is a well-grounded belief that the future will bring out and fulfill what the life we have come to know promises and prophesies. We trust the unseen to complete the seen, and we make our venture.

Religious faith in its highest and best sense is of this type. It is not blind groping, haphazard believing. It is building out upon the solid pillars of the soul's experience. It is the soul's power to see what fits and fulfills and completes what is already here. Our very finite nature calls for a world of infinite reality to fulfill it. Our

hunger and thirst of soul reveal something in us which no earthly supplies can satisfy. Our sins and failures and frailties call for the help and healing of a divine Savior. We are made so that we cannot live without streams of spiritual energy, without the incoming of saving grace and transforming power. We cannot be victorious and triumphant without a heavenly Friend, a divine Companion. And in our need, in our stress, he offers himself to us. He comes with his help and healing. He seems completely to fit our need. But only a venture of faith can settle the matter for us. He has saved others. He has enabled others to more than conquer. It is a safe venture, and it stands and vindicates every test.

III

A RELIGION WHICH DOES THINGS

In his recent book, *A Challenge to the Church,* William Temple says:

"The religious experience, which is indeed the soul of personal religion, does not consist in passing states, but is what the name should imply — an experience whole and entire which is religious through and through, so that our experience of business, of politics, of art, and of all human relationships becomes a religious experience."

He goes on further to say that the exalted moments of high-tide experience, when the soul feels flooded with unusual incomes of divine life, " should be merely moments perpetually renewing the light in which we see the world and the vital strength by which we live among men."

This is a modern way of saying what was so wonderfully said in a letter written on the shores of the Ægean Sea by a man who was " fighting beasts " in an ancient city, " dying daily " with crucifying struggles, and perpetually confronted with entrenched evils and iniquitous customs. On top of his load of perplexities in Ephesus had just been piled the news of the growing disintegration of his church across the sea in Corinth. A tale of woe was pouring in — now from " the house of Chloe," now again from a delegation of the church sent over to ask help, and finally through an epistle which some of his friends wrote to him. It becomes only too clear that much " wood, hay, and stubble " had been built in with the purer saintly material there. Divisions and contentions were playing havoc. Crass immoralities, well known in that environment, were assailing the members. Unanswerable metaphysical questions were confusing their minds, and practical

problems of organization and procedure were urgently pressing for solution.

Somewhere in a little room of a private house — perhaps of a certain Mary then living in Ephesus, "who bestowed much labor upon us"— the marvelous message was written to those "called to be saints" in Corinth. The thing I preached among you in those months of fellowship, he tells them, was not a novel philosophy subject to endless debate. I made you acquainted with a new power of life, an energy of salvation that demonstrates itself through the whole life of the whole man, until the entire personality, body and all, becomes a temple, a place where the Spirit of God is manifested. This religion of life and demonstration, expressed everywhere in this Ægean letter, comes to its full splendor of expression in the thirteenth chapter, where the beauty of the style suddenly reveals the greatness of the soul of the man, as great style always does. Religion, as it comes to light in this extraordinary passage, is not some rare exalted state, some startling ecstasy, some spectacular wonder granted to a favorite saint. Many persons coveted this high state and strained after it. They looked upon the striking "gift of tongues," the power to speak some celes-

tial language such as angels speak, as the very pinnacle of religion. It is not so, these great words tell them. One may attain that goal, achieve that state, and still be only like "a noisy gong" that attracts attention. Nor again is religion to be found in a signal acquisition of knowledge. One may understand the mysteries and unravel the secrets of nature and yet fail to arrive anywhere. He may be able to extend his powers of vision by aid of microscope and telescope; he may invent engines which add unsuspected powers of speed to his legs; he may construct mechanisms that carry his voice with amazing quickness across wide spaces; he may fly faster and farther than any bird. And yet all this may bring no increment to his soul. With all his added range of knowledge, he himself, in all that really concerns life, may be a zero —"nothing."

Religion is not found then, is not revealed, in an isolated and separable aspect of life. It is a way of living which affects the whole of life, inner and outer, in all its attitudes and relationships. If one word is to be found which gathers up and expresses this complete spiritualization of life, the best word for it is St. Paul's untranslatable *agape,* which means a living power flowing through all the activities of daily life, touching every aspect,

transforming every relationship, and bringing a vital strength into every coöperative effort. We translate it as "love," but we must not think of it as "a soft and cooing" thing, an emotional state, or sentimental gush. It is primarily power. It is energy expressing itself in action.

In fact, the only way to grasp its meaning adequately is to turn to the supreme exhibition of it and that is in Christ crucified, where the power of God making men saved comes to full revelation. One typical race looked for God in rare and spectacular events, in signs and wonders. Another group expected to find him through speculation and dialectic, and thrilled over the construction of vast intellectual systems. But no external "sign" can reveal God's character. No system of knowledge can bring to light the inner nature of the Eternal Heart. Only experience will suffice for that, and an experience of it is possible only if God himself breaks through somewhere in the universe and reveals the heart we seek in a life we can appreciate and interpret. Christ is the place in the universe where God himself breaks through and shows the power of love in full operation. Not as storm and thunder, not as fire and earthquake, but as love, that suffers long and is kind and will not let go, does God come to seek

us and find us and save us. We could go on in our sin and stand anything but that. When that love is clearly seen and felt and known, it conquers, and it more than conquers. It becomes the most dynamic moral force in the universe. It saves, it renews, it transforms, it vitalizes, it spiritualizes. It works the one real miracle which proves that God has come. It makes out of men like us persons who can exhibit and transmit the same love which saved us. We discover how to become living epistles of the thirteenth of First Corinthians!

IV

THE GOSPEL OF GOD WITH US

In one of the most wonderful passages ever written by anybody (2 Cor. III. 5), St. Paul contrasts the two types of religion, one of which he calls "the ministry of condemnation," and the other "the ministry of righteousness"; one "the ministry of the letter," the other "the ministry of the spirit"; one "the ministry of the old covenant," which is passing away, the other "the ministry of the new covenant," which remains. The primary difference between the two types of religion lies for him in the fact that the "old," as

he calls it, is external. It is a legal system written in graven letters — imposed from without by a lawgiver and to be followed in detail under the expectation of death as the penalty of disobedience. The mark and badge of it, he says, is always slavery, and, in spite of the fact that the system is "obeyed," the heart behind the veil remains all the time unchanged and untransformed.

The "new," on the other hand, is fundamentally inward and of the spirit. Instead of a lawgiver who fulminates commands, with terror of condemnation, the God of all mercy and tenderness "shines into our hearts to give the light of his glorious knowledge in the face of Jesus Christ." And his revelation of light and grace and glory and righteousness does not remain outside us as something foreign and external, but it becomes a formative life and power in us and makes us a living letter, or epistle, of Jesus Christ, with the new ministry of glory written in the inmost substance of our being, so that the Christian himself, and not a written document, is the exhibition of the message or covenant — the believer himself is the document. But, unlike the "old" written code, the new document undergoes change and is capable of progress, for as the believer — the living epistle — lives unveiled in the

presence of the luminous Christ, he is changed into an ever-growing likeness by the working of the Spirit within him. He goes from glory to glory in an ever-heightening transformation of spirit, until men see in him the marks of the Lord Jesus. But there is no slavery here, for where the spirit of the Lord is there are liberty and inward freedom, and obedience becomes a thing of joy.

Once you enter upon this ministry of the new covenant — the ministry which liberates and which changes the minister himself into an epistle of Jesus Christ — you no longer "faint" in the presence of difficulties and misunderstandings: "having obtained this ministry we faint not." It is possible now to be "pressed on every side, yet not straitened; to be perplexed, but not unto despair; to be smitten down, yet not destroyed, always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life also of Jesus is manifested in our bodies!" That is the supreme boldness of St. Paul's wonderful message, that the life of Jesus can be so written in us that we can manifest it "in our mortal bodies"; that the dying of the Lord Jesus can be "borne about" in our lives as we live among men.

Suddenly he rises to a new height, as though at that point a fresh inspiration swept over him,

like a new sun risen on mid-noon. He now realizes, apparently for the first time, that this new inward man, this hidden unseen self which the Spirit forms in us in likeness to the image and glory of Christ, will be a permanent and eternal self, capable of surviving "the decaying of our outward man." If that is so, then the "dissolving of our outward tent," the fleshly body, is a matter of no special concern, for we shall not be "naked," or "uncovered," when that is gone, since by this inward spiritual process God has been constructing in us an immortal, eternal, heavenly house or habitation, so that, even with the body gone, we shall be "clothed" with our heavenly house. God made us for this very thing, that mortality might be swallowed up of life, and in so far as we are changed into the divine image we have formed a permanent and ever-enduring inward self, which is always "at home with the Lord."

That is St. Paul's new ministry, which, he rightly claims, "far exceeds in glory" the old ministry of the letter. It is certainly bold and daring, and it is still far beyond the slow faith and vision of most of us, who easily hark back to the literal, the tangible, and the external. We are still too unbelieving for "the light of the gos-

pel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, to dawn in us." We talk of our new theologies and our old theologies, but these party-lines, these middle walls of partition, would all fall away and vanish if we could rise to this gospel of the new covenant — which is the transformation of a man like us into a living document which manifests Christ, and into an immortal self which in any world will be " at home with the Lord."

CHAPTER III

THE WAY OF DEDICATION

I

THE INNER COMPULSION

No life amounts to anything until it becomes absorbed in some aim which carries it out of and beyond itself. The man who is occupied in consuming three meals a day, in dressing his body, and in giving it its due quota of comfortable sleep is superior to the oyster only in corporeal size; they are both biological specimens, only one is larger and more complicated than the other, and, because of his larger power, one of them can eat the other! Now, if this biological man is ever to rise above the biological level and be something more, he must discover a way of living which delivers him from the mere play of natural forces — the mere pursuit of materials for the animal life — and this lays upon him an inner compulsion to devote himself to an ideal; that is, to an unselfish and spiritual cause, a cause for the pro-

motion and advancement of interests other than his own. Nobody gets out of the biological order of life until in some degree he has learned to say: "For their sakes I consecrate myself."

There are, of course, many degrees and scales of this struggle for the life of others, this consecration to unselfish causes, this way of living for aims that are enlarging and spiritual. Many a person finds that his occupation not only supplies him with food and clothing, but also gives him opportunities for the consecrated life. The shoemaker who makes an absolutely honest shoe, not merely because he wants his wages, but still more because he wants the little unknown child that is to wear it to have a solid and durable shoe, who therefore pegs and stitches his own spirit of honesty into his piece of work — that man has risen above the biological scale and has found a way of living a life which has a touch of consecration upon it.

The sweeper of city streets is, often enough, no doubt, a dull, stupid man who goes to his work with hardly more enthusiasm than the mule shows, and sweeps because he would starve if he did not work. But every now and then there is a sweeper of another type — a real "white angel" who knows that city dust is laden with deadly germs

and disease, and that unless this dust is well and carefully swept away it will endanger the lives of the city; and he knows, too, that in sweeping it he is risking his own life. In spite of that, he sweeps in the dark corners even when no inspector watches him, and forgets his own life in consecration to the safety of others. He belongs somewhere in the order of those unselfish and spiritual knights who have lost themselves to find themselves. "Telephone girls" do not usually impress us as consecrated, but when, as happened a few years ago in a terrible crisis which threatened two towns with annihilation, two of these exchange girls stayed at their post and risked their own lives to warn the citizens to flee before the oncoming wall of water, we must feel that they had formed and cultivated a way of living which took them out of self and consecrated them to unselfish aims.

We stand almost appalled at the bald selfishness which is wrecking so many American homes. The number of cases in which the decree of divorce follows hard after the words, "until death do us part," has become ominous and staggering. But we must not overlook nor forget the millions of happy homes in which men and women are consecrated through love; in which husband and wife toil and sacrifice for each other and for their chil-

dren in radiant joy, and in which, through sickness and death, through poverty and privation, through loss and sorrow, as well as in sunshine and prosperity, two persons have ceased to be two "units" and are devoted to each other in self-forgetful love. Here, again, is consecration of no mean order.

It is almost nineteen hundred years since a little band of men who heard "words of life" from the lips of a wonderful Teacher forsook their nets and boats and fishing-tackle to follow him and, through consecration to him and his cause, found themselves on a new spiritual level. Sometimes the Church has failed to realize its mission and has been content to appeal to the self-side in men and to offer them an easy means of passage from a world of woe to a haven of refuge and a scene of peace and joy; and it may be that even now the Church is too much commercialized and permeated with a spirit of refined self-seeking; but still, as of old on the shores of Gennesaret, men, when they hear this Christ call, leave all with joy and follow him. There are plenty of Christians, no doubt, whose religion is formal and traditional and without much insight; many who blindly hold truths for which nobler men have suffered and died; but, nevertheless, there is a goodly number of men and

women who are Christians by first-hand experience, Christians who through Christ have found God and have consecrated themselves with joy to do his will and to lose themselves that they may find themselves in him.

II

THE ALL FOR THE ALL

Religion — above all, Christ's religion — is not something which can thrive on a "fifty-fifty" basis. That simple Brother of the Common Life, Thomas à Kempis, was profoundly right when he said four hundred years ago, "We must give the all for the All." The great religious leaders, the persons who have started a new line of march, have always known that truth, and it was their practice of it which more than anything else made them religious leaders. The Laodicean, neither hot nor cold, economical of spiritual zeal and exercising no more faith than is absolutely required for conventional religious purposes, with one eye on the main chance here below and the other turned feebly on the celestial gate, is a well-known type of Christian. But, however common the type may be, it is a pitiable, miserable failure.

"Surely they see not God, I know,
Nor all the chivalry of His,
The soldier saints who, row on row,
Burn upward each to his point of bliss —
Since, the end of life being manifest,
He had cut his way through the world to this."

Nowhere does this virile, all-for-All way of life find such striking emphasis and illustration as in the sayings and in the practice of the great Galilean. Religion for him is not an unnecessary luxury; it is the staff of life, the bread and water by which men live. The "whole world" set over against this indispensable life of the soul weighs nothing. Even the eye that hinders the soul is to be bored out and the hand that interferes with the central life is to be hacked off and flung away, because there is only one focal thing in the universe that matters and toward which all energies must bend. Two very simple, yet very profound, parables are told by the Master to illustrate this principle of giving the all for the All. A man casually digging in a field hits upon a buried treasure which in some earlier time of war had been hastily hidden in the ground as the owner fled before the invading enemy. The finder, thrilling with joy over his happy discovery, goes and sells all that he possesses and invests

everything in the field which contains his treasure. Another man, watching the pearl-divers come into port laden with their "finds," sees with his trained eye, among the many ordinary pearls, one priceless pearl. He hurries home, disposes of all his stock of goods, sells his shop and bit of land, and goes back to the divers and buys that lustrous pearl of great price which is worth all other possessions. Those are Christ's figures to illustrate the true attitude of the soul toward the kingdom of God, the highest vision and ideal of life. It must not take its place alongside of other things and stand on a competitive level with them. It must rise high over all and become the absorbing goal and central pursuit of the soul. That is, beyond question, the secret of spiritual power. The religion that costs nothing, that demands no hard sacrifices of other things, that does not lift the life out of low-level motives, is worth little and makes little difference to the life. The type of religion, on the other hand, which costs the all, which makes the cross the central fact that dominates the life as its one driving power, becomes an incalculable force and turns many to salvation. We have been trying to get on with the "fifty-fifty" scheme. We have endeavored to take over ease with our comfortable religious faith. We have scaled

down the demands to attract the economically minded. But it is now, as always, a false trail and an abortive undertaking. We must return to Thomas à Kempis's principle and learn to give the all for the All. We must go back still farther to the way set forth by a greater than the Brother of the Common Life and make everything else in the universe yield to the central call of the kingdom of God.

Sacrifice for its own sake is asceticism. Surrender, mortification, crucifixion as a dumb negation of life cannot be recommended. It is always better to live in the yea than to live in the nay, where the yea is possible. But when a clear collision comes, when life forces a choice between the soul's true destiny and all else, then there must be a surrender of everything which tends to anchor the soul to its inland harbor when it should be sailing the open sea with God — the all must go for the sake of the All! This higher way of life, this capacity to see real value, to let the bird in the hand go for the sake of catching the two in the bush, this power to live by the unseen and to insist on having God or nothing — that is what we mean by " faith."

That it " works " there can be no doubt. That it produces a new quality of soul must be admitted.

The spiritual experts have one testimony to give. For a sample opinion let us take the account of a little-known eighteenth-century saint, Thomas Story:

"He called for my life and I offered it at His footstool; but He gave it me as a prey, with unspeakable addition. He called for my will, and I resigned it at His call, but he returned me His own in token of His love. He called for the world and I laid it at His feet, with the crowns thereof; I withheld them not at the beckoning of His hand. But mark the benefit of exchange! For he gave me, instead of the earth, a kingdom of eternal peace, and in lieu of the crowns of vanity a crown of joy. . . . He gave me joy which no tongue can express and peace which passeth understanding. My heart was melted with the height of comfort; my soul was immersed in the depth of joy; my eyes overflowed with tears of greatest pleasure. . . . I begged Himself and He gave All."

III

HABAKKUKEANS

In a charming essay written several years ago Dr. William Osler — now Sir William — dealt with two groups of people whom he called, respectively, Gallionians and Salomics. The Gallionians, named from Gallio in Corinth, who "cared for none of these things," are, in the famous doc-

tor's essay, persons who are too busy with the affairs of this world to give any time or thought to spiritual issues. There are surely many Gallionians among us still! The Salomics, named after Salome, supposed to be the mother of the sons of Zebedee, who asked Jesus to give the highest commissions in his gift to her sons, are those persons who look upon religion as a way of promoting themselves, of advancing their position. Salome meant well. She loved the boys she had borne and brought up and she wanted to do as well as she could for them. She believed, as so many mothers since her day have believed, that the great thing to pray for and push for in this world is visible success. She knew of nothing better or more to be desired than position, place, and power. She had dreamed, ever since she was a little girl, of a coming great king who would break the yoke of Rome, make Jerusalem a free, holy city, a center of the new age — who would be a world-ruler, with a splendid court on Mount Zion. What glory to have two sons in that court! Could a mother aspire to any loftier triumph than to have her boys sit on either side of the throne of this Messianic king! What a prospect for two fishermen of the Galilean lake!

It took some courage to come out with her re-

quest, but she had carried it for weeks on her heart and, at last when the opportunity favored, it slipped off her lips, and the word was spoken: "Lord, grant that my two sons may sit one on thy right hand and the other on thy left, when thou comest into thy kingdom."

"That is not the right thing to ask," is the solemn answer. "It shows ignorance of the real nature of the kingdom. He who aspires to enter my kingdom must not expect places, but suffering; not honors, but opportunities to sacrifice; not rewards, but hard baptisms. Are thy two sons able to suffer with me?"

The world has never learned the lesson which this ambitious mother's experience ought to teach. There is still much Salomic religion in all churches. The stress is laid on rewards; the ambition is for the glory of place. The old ignorance of the real nature of the kingdom is living on.

We cannot expect to have a religion of power until we get beyond a religion of selfishness and of self-seeking. The person who is "saved" by an appeal to some selfish interest will need to be "saved" again, and the saving process will have to be repeated until he is saved from himself. "Ye are not seeking the right thing" would be spoken to many of us if the Master were among

us as of old. He would ask if we were ready for our share of toil and pain, ready for the cup and the baptism; ready to see the ambition for easy glory blighted completely; ready to see everything go but the spirit of love and consecration. Salomic religion dies hard; it is rooted deep in our instincts. Men have all along been seeking for harps and robes and crowns. They have dreamed of golden streets and blissful mansions. They are praying for rest and ease. Are they the right things to ask? Is it not Salome's blunder over again?

There is still a third type of persons which Dr. Osler did not mention in his essay. I shall call them Habakkukeans. I am sorry to use such a barbaric-looking and sounding word, but it names a very real type and one which we greatly need to have increased. Through some hard and tremendous experience this ancient prophet, Habakkuk, had discovered that the only thing which matters after all is finding God and being in close fellowship with him. Everything else may go — if he abides sure. Listen to his great declaration of faith: "Although the fig-tree may not blossom, neither shall there be any fruit in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the

fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord and joy in the God of my salvation — and I will walk in my high places!" Here at last selfishness is washed out. Religion is no longer a successful system of double-entry bookkeeping. God is loved now for his own sake, and the soul triumphs whether the bank-account prospers or not. Satan's sneer in the book of Job — that pious people never serve God for naught, but have an eye out for returns — is well answered. Here is a stalwart man whose known biography could be written on a thumb-nail but whose faith shines like a beacon across the dead centuries. He flung out that great word, which furnished both St. Paul and Martin Luther with a watchword: "The righteous man shall live by his faith." Everything else can be dispensed with if only faith in God remains, for a man can live by that!

The white soul, the purified inner nature, the heart aflame with love for God, the whole self consecrated to service — these are the things to seek. To have attained that spirit is to be a Habakkukean!

IV

CONSECRATION TO SERVICE

Almost all Paul's Epistles divide into two well-defined parts: the second part in each case being introduced by a *therefore,* which marks a kind of watershed of the Epistle. What goes before this momentous *therefore* is devoted in the main to an illumination of the Divine plan and purpose — an unfolding of the Grace of God as the dynamic to salvation. What comes after the watershed *therefore* is an appeal for action, a call to human consecration and devotion — in a word is the practical application of the message about God and his Grace: "I beseech you *therefore,* brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, as an intelligent service. And be not fashioned according to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Rom. XII. 1–2).

The self-revealing nature of God, his self-sacrificing, self-giving love is the moral dynamic of the gospel, the virtue-making power; but nothing defeats religion more effectively than to turn

this living fact into doctrine and dogma as though it were the sum and the end of religion. The great teachers of the New Testament always put the final emphasis on deed, on action, on life, on character. "He that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them" is the rock-man. "Not every one that sayeth, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that *doeth* the will of my Father." In fact the very condition of the revelation of truth is obedient action: "He that doeth the will shall know of the doctrine." This same pragmatic method runs through all the Epistles. The Apostle James, who seems sometimes rather pious and legal than profoundly religious, has nevertheless given us a great piece of psychological insight, as fresh and modern as though it were written by his unapostolic namesake Professor James. He says that "if any one is a hearer of the divine word and not a *doer* of it, he is like a man who sees his natural face in a mirror, for he looks at himself, and then goes away and quickly forgets how he looked." It is a notorious fact that none of us can visualize our own faces from memory. We see ourselves often enough, but the image fades out at once and leaves us only a vague blur. Just the same way goodness which is only thought about and not

translated into motor effect,— emotions over the love of God which never drive us into personal actions of love,— quickly fade away and leave us as though they had not been, or rather leave us weaker and worse for the fruitless evaporation. Paul's Epistles ring everywhere with trumpet-calls to action, and even the casual reader must be impressed with the athletic temper of these great spiritual documents. One hears him call to his young friend, Timothy, as though from the side lines, "Exercise thyself unto godliness; fight the good fight of faith"; and nobody can forget the picture of the ideal Christian *cap-a-pie* with his face set for knightly action. "Stand, *therefore*, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; withal taking the shield of faith; and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit" (Eph. VI. 14–17). John's message, throbbing as it is with the memory of the Word of Life, which his hands have handled, and glorified as it is by its upward look to God, who at last is known as Love, is as practical and pragmatic as the rest, with its reiterated *test* of religion in practical love: "Hereby shall we know that we are born of God, if we *love*." And finally the

Apocalypse closes the New Testament with a refrain on *overcoming,* which to this writer means not an easy flight from the world, but the subordination of the lower appetites and desires to higher ends, and a dedication of the will to goodness, out of love for him who has loved us with a redeeming love. This great prophetic book ends with the followers of Christ, united in a relation to him (which in beautiful figurative language is called a *bridal* relation), and joining with the invisible Spirit in the unending work of bringing men to God—"the Spirit and the Bride say come!"

I have in the briefest possible way tried to show that the stress of the New Testament is on action, not on dogma, on the dedication of the whole self to goodness, not on beatific vision. The Gospel message culminates in its compelling appeal to follow Christ, in its constraint of love to live as he lived—"He loved me and gave himself for me, *therefore* the life I now live in the flesh I live in the faith of the Son."

Consecration in some degree is involved in any sane or rational life. It is only the person who can forget himself, and become absorbed in some large aim or end of life, that can enter into the joy of living; and it is only the person who can

thus forget himself in his work that can do anything well. "If I lose myself I find myself," was Galahad's preparation for finding the Holy Grail, and it is a first law of life for anybody who wishes to make his life count. It is a great mistake to suppose that "consecration" is a word which belongs only in the religious vocabulary. It is the secret of everybody's power. All work of every sort that has a touch of genius in it has come out of consecration, and it has come from somebody that forgot himself in his work.

Seven times over, in our Gospel records, Christ says, "He that saves his life shall lose it, and he that loses his life shall find it." It is a law of life at least as elemental and universal as "survival of the fittest," and there are few tragedies greater than the tragedy we see so often repeated, of persons who with intense passion have pursued pleasure, and have stormed the citadels of success, and have come to the end of life with their lean hands empty, and their hearts burned out to dull ash, with no hope and no faith in any larger good to be, because they have never lost themselves in any noble task or service and so have never found themselves! The happy people in the world are not the persons of large leisure, whose loins are ungirt, whose lamps are unlit and who have no

work to do except occasionally to shake the bread-fruit tree. The happy people are toilers, consecrated to difficult tasks, absorbed in doing things, finding their lives by sinking them in the world's work and the world's problems.

I want to keep continually in the foreground the fact that consecration must not be a mere emotional giving of life to causes. The things that matter most are (1) What you put your life into, and (2) *What kind of a life you put in.* The reason that it matters so much what you put your life into is that some things are so much more worth doing than other things are, that is, they forward the welfare of the race better than other things do. The man who can teach men has no *right* to raise turnips. Then, too, we all have special gifts and aptitudes which peculiarly fit us for some tasks rather than for other tasks. The very possession of a marked aptitude or gift is in itself a divine call, and carries with it a summons to service — a *noblesse oblige.*

But it is of vastly more importance what kind of life you put in. Emerson says that the Gulf-stream will run through a straw if it is parallel to the current,— and so it will,— that is, a little of it will, but a great deal more of it will run through a ten-foot pipe. A life of a single candle-power

and of a single horse-power will do something if it is consecrated to a definite mission, but the hundred-power life is much more *economic!* It uses no more raw material, while its impact on the race, its circle of dynamic influence, is vastly greater, and it gathers power as it goes, like a falling stone.

The first concern, then, of any one who is eager to live a consecrated life should be to become as much of a person as may be. Culture and consecration ought never to be separated. They are when cut apart like the two blades of the scissors with the rivet gone. Culture alone is cold and thin. Consecration alone is weak and empty. "For their sakes I sanctify myself," was the great word of the Master: "for their sakes I put myself at my best" ought to be the aim of us all. The doctor who has a passion for saving life fulfills his mission best, not by hurrying into it unequipped and untrained, but by taking years of his precious life in learning how to do it. The life-saver is consecrated to no purpose if he cannot row in the storm and swim in the breaking sea. The mother may be ever so consecrated to the interests of her child, but she must as well know how little lives are rightly developed, and she must know the relative value of spanking and sugar-plums. The social worker may be as consecrated as St. Francis, and

yet may waste his life if he is unsound in sociology and awry in economic theory. Self-enlargement and self-giving are the two indissoluble traits of a good life.

It perhaps needs hardly to be said (it is so evident) that true consecration can never be reached by artificial methods, or by sheer effort. The life must be kindled by an inward *passion* for an end that is large enough and high enough to feed the life and draw it on. The moment we discover that a person is " doing good " for selfish ends and with a view to utilitarian results, we despise his good deeds and will have none of them, for, in the last analysis, it is the life that we appreciate, and not the " things." In fact the highest consecration is, like genius, unconscious of itself. The person who is gloriously consecrated is so completely absorbed in the task he has to do, so interested working out the end of goodness which he has in view, that he is hardly aware that he is sacrificing his life to it. Grace Darling could never understand why her heroic act stirred England so powerfully: in artless simplicity she used to say, " I did what everybody else would have done." There is a fine naïveté in words which Christ puts in the mouths of the blessed ones on his right hand: " When did we do all these things for which we

are commended?" What a great word that is which the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews uses to utter the very essence of Christ's sublime sacrifice: "Who for the joy that was set before him endured the Cross!"

V

POURED OUT

In the annals of David's life there is a very fine story of heroic daring, and of the way David by a sudden inspiration turned the splendid bravery of his men into a religious sacrament. In the midst of hard battle, David expressed a longing for a drink of water out of the well at the gate of Bethlehem, at a time when Bethlehem was held by the army of the Philistines. Three of the most valiant of David's "mighty men" at once volunteered to break through the enemies' line and get the water for their king. At the risk of their lives they got through to the well and brought the skin of hard-won water back to David. If he had done the usual thing and had drunk the water which his brave men had got for him, we should never have heard the story, but he did not drink it. It seemed to him too precious, too deeply tinged with the blood-red spirit of risk and sacri-

fice, to be put to common, ordinary uses, and, uplifted by the beauty of the deed, David poured the water out unto the Lord.

What a waste! What a way to treat his brave men! is the comment of dull common-sense. What a pity for the dry sand to drink up the water that had been got at such a venture! is the philistine view of the matter. But to those who have eyes for the inner meaning of deeds, this act of David's brings to light the fascinating, attractive quality of character which has made the first king of Judah with all his faults an immortal figure. He does the sublime and unexpected thing. He will not turn to personal, selfish uses the gift which comes to him deeply colored with the sacrificial daring of his men. The wine-skin holds for him not water to be drunk, but the precious life-blood of brave men to be offered to the Lord as a sacrament of love. There is a parallel story in the New Testament that is still finer and more moving. A woman who has suddenly found a new life, a new hope, a new power through the unexpected gentleness and tenderness of Christ and through his extraordinary faith in her comes in at a dinner where he is and, in a moment of overmastering love and gratitude at the memory of the past, she breaks a costly alabaster vase of

priceless perfume and pours it recklessly out upon the Saviour's feet. The common-sense observers cry out against the waste, and the economically minded figure out how much could have been purchased with this spilled ointment, but Christ sees further. He instantly catches the deeper meaning. For him, it is the revelation of a spirit, a devotion, a passion that loves and that cannot stop to figure and calculate. He sees that there is at least one person in the world who understands him, who has discovered his way, and who feels the absolute worth of love. She has not sold her perfume to inaugurate some paltry charity that would bring her cheap fame; she has instead, without any calculation, made an undying sacrament of it.

The world is full of chances for this kind of sacramental service. There is hardly anything which touches our higher life that is not blood-red with the sacrifices that won it for us. The privileges that have become our common heritage have all cost an untold amount of venture and daring and suffering and death. We too often take these things as a matter of course. We use them as we do the air and sunlight as though they were ours by right of birth and we do not have the high quality of poetry and religion in our nature that

makes us able to raise them to a sacramental service as we should.

The Cross itself has again and again been thought of and used as a symbol of security: "He paid the price"; "He died that we might be safe." It is seized upon as a way of relief. Everything has been done for us without us. Our title is now clear to mansions in the skies. Surely not thus should we accept the sacrifice. If it is what the most devout souls have believed it to be, then all life henceforth must be colored and altered by this unparalleled act of love and sacrifice. Instead of bringing us the seal of perpetual security, instead of being meant for our own selfish relief, it is a call to us to pour out the life that has been given to us in the highest way of sacramental service to which we can raise our vision. If redemption has come to us in this way of uncalculating love, then we can never live again in the poor, thin, common, plodding way of old; the love of Christ "constrains us" to live the bold and daring way of faith and love that ventures all and keeps back nothing.

The tremendous cost of freedom and of self-government makes the word "country" mean something new when we see it colored with unstinted sacrifice. But here again we cannot

calmly drink the precious water to quench our own private thirst. We cannot settle down in security and enjoy in peace the treasures which others have won for us. *Noblesse oblige.* We are bound as patriotic sons of noble fathers to make their sacrificial gains genuine sacraments of life. We can do this best by risking all that freedom means to us, all that country stands for in our vision, in a brave effort to bring forth and secure for our children a still greater freedom and a still loftier country. Patriotic service is made the truest sacrament when it is devoted to the task of raising patriotism itself to its higher meaning. "The greatest legacy the hero leaves his race is — to have been a hero."

Our own religion, born in heroic endeavor and baptized in unstinted suffering, bravely borne, has not seldom been quietly accepted as a way of ease and security. The water brought at such risk has been drunk in shelter and in peace. We have often felt that we were doing enough if we enjoyed our privileges and passed them on, but slightly shrunken, to the next generation. Our ideal has been "preservation." We have aimed to guard and keep, to have and to hold.

It will not do. It is a miserable ambition. It is time for us to discover the sacramental way of

treating this precious water which our ancestors drew for us. We cannot use it for our private enjoyment, we cannot save it for our children, we cannot treat it as *ours,* we must pour it out in uncalculating, self-forgetful devotion. It is better that we should *lose* it than that we should merely succeed in saving it for our own ends. It is too sacred, too red with the life-blood of heroes, to be used in the dull, common way of commonplace men. It must be poured out like the Bethlehem water, like the Bethany perfume, like the life of Christ, poured out without counting the cost or calculating the results, and made a real sacrament of life, a spontaneous bestowal of love for love's sake.

CHAPTER IV

THE THINGS BY WHICH WE LIVE

I

THE PLUMB-LINE

ONE of the most vivid pictures in the Old Testament is that which the prophet Amos gives us of the Lord standing in the midst of Israel and holding a plumb-line in his hand.

The popular idea of a prophet conceives him to be a strange-looking man, wild-eyed, highly wrought, given to fanciful visions and, in the main, a mysterious fore-teller of remote events. In real fact he was strikingly unlike that crude sketch. The distinctive prophet was a person of rare sanity and balance, a man who could look straight at facts and with clairvoyant insight could see through them and discover what they *involved.* He could tell from the lines and curves of movements and events and motives how they would necessarily fulfill themselves as they unfolded with the process of time. In the proper sense of the

word, he was not primarily a fore-teller, he was a revealer of the deeper meaning of present existing conditions. He possessed an unerring sense of the direction in which deeds were carrying on the doer of them, as unerring as the artist's sense of harmony or of beauty. It was this power of moral insight that made the prophets the statesmen of their epochs. They saw and proclaimed the trend and drift of policies. They looked on through and announced in advance where a given course would finally terminate. They were intense patriots, but their supreme loyalty and devotion was to the ideal country, the country as it ought to be, and they judged all policies and expedients in the light of their clear insight.

Amos, a keeper of sheep and a dresser of vineyards, in the country about Tekoa, was the first of the literary prophets and one of the profoundest moral revealers of any age. He was not afraid of "the face of clay." He dared to say before any man, or any group of men, what he actually thought. He understood the movements going on around him as clearly as he understood the habits of his sheep.

> "He read each wound, each weakness clear,
> He struck his finger on the place;
> And said: 'Thou ailest here, and here.'"

But the great thing after all which he announces in his plumb-line figure is the fact of an unescapable, inexorable, pervasive law of moral gravitation in the universe. There is no caprice about moral results. You cannot hoodwink the forces which fulfill events. As fire burns your hand, if you play with it carelessly, as gravity will tumble you over the precipice, if you step falsely on the narrow ledge, so, too, the swing of inevitable moral consequences will follow as a doom the deeds of men and of nations. "By no clever trickery," wrote one of our sound present-day teachers, "can profligacy or low living come into possession of the beatitudes." There hangs the plumb-line, dropped as from the hand of God and by it every deed is tested. There is no favoritism, no wheedling, no capricious exception. If the life is unplumb, if the deeds and policies of it swing away from a line of rectitude, nothing can save the structure from collapse — nothing but a rebuilding of it in conformity with the moral laws of gravitation.

This deeper prophecy which lays bare the eternal nature of things and which announces days of judgment as always coming is a characteristic not only of Amos and the other rugged prophets of Israel and Judah, but it is as well an inherent

feature of the work of all the greatest interpreters of life. Euripides saw the plumb-line as clearly as Amos did. He will not believe in the popular, capricious, immoral gods —" gods who do aught base are not gods at all." But he does believe, with all the virility of his great soul, in the moral purpose of that eternal nature of things,

> " Whom veils enfold
> Of light, of dark night flecked with gleams of gold,
> Of star-hosts dancing round thee without end."

He — that unerring moral will — guides all things in accordance with truth and goodness.

Socrates is another prophet who knew, with clear insight, that the foundations of the universe rest upon immovable pillars of righteousness. A man can always swing boldly out and trust the moral nature of the universe. The only evil thing in the world, he thinks, is to *do* evil. To suffer injustice for a brief span is no great hardship, but to be attached by act of will to a course of injustice is the one thing that can have no happy outcome — " I know," he declares, and in most particulars he professed to know very little, " I know that injustice and disobedience to a better is always evil and dishonorable." " Think not of life and children first and of justice afterwards, but of justice first.

If you go about returning evil for evil, and injury for injury, breaking covenants and agreements, wronging those whom you ought not to wrong, the laws of the invisible world will treat you as an enemy."

The greatest of the poets bear witness to this fact of the plumb-line. Dante is not mainly concerned with a supernal world beyond the stars or with a dire region of doom under the earth. He is merely telling us of the inevitable recoil of deeds and choices. Every man is building the house which he is going to inhabit, and is now creating the climate and atmosphere that will inevitably bring him an environment of joy or woe.

Nobody can ever forget the scene in *Hamlet*, where Shakespeare gives us, as he so often does in this and other plays, his announcement of this law of the plumb-line. The wicked king is trying to pray — but he cannot find any form of prayer that can be efficacious until he changes his moral attitude and gets a new purpose of heart.

"What form of prayer
Can serve my turn? *Forgive me my foul murder?*
That cannot be; since I am still possessed
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition and my queen.
May one be pardoned, and retain th' offense?

In the corrupted currents of this world
Offense's gilded hand may shove by justice;
And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law: but 'tis not so above;
There is no shuffling,— there the action lies
In its true nature."

Among our more modern prophets, Emerson has given as robust expression to the law of moral gravitation as any have given, especially in his great Essay on "Compensation." His finest short statement of the truth is, however, to be found in his Address on Abraham Lincoln, in which he says:

"There is a serene Providence which rules the fate of nations, which makes little account of time, little of one generation or race, makes no account of disasters, conquers alike by what is called defeat or by what is called victory, thrusts aside enemy and obstruction, crushes everything immoral as inhuman, and obtains the ultimate triumph of the best race by the sacrifice of everything that resists the moral laws of the world."

The question remains to be asked, whether this is merely a theory of certain idealists and dreamers, whom we name "prophets," or whether it is indeed *so;* i. e., a real truth of the eternal nature of things. Nobody ever can "prove" such a mighty assertion about our universe. It is impos-

sible to demonstrate that every deed carries its inevitable nemesis in itself and that moral consequences are as unvarying as the law of gravitation or the swing of planetary orbits. But everything we know about habit and character tends to verify this law of the prophets. The man himself, as William James says, may not "count" his wrong deed, "and a kind heaven may not count it; but it is being counted none the less. Down among his nerve-cells and fibers the molecules are counting it, registering it and storing it up to be used against him when the next temptation comes." Apparent "success" and a seeming "efficiency" that brings coveted "results" are poor substitutes for a rightly fashioned life. The world with its crasser judgments may approve the men who seem to hit the desired goals, but the triumph is dearly bought if it has been won by the sacrifice of the growth of the soul itself.

Whether the moral law is cosmic, i. e., whether the entire universe in all its processes is working out a moral purpose, and every least movement of evolving matter is coöperant to a moral end, is too large a question for us to answer. There are certainly many facts which challenge such a faith. But it is hard to see how anything can be moving to *no purpose,* how any cosmos can come by acci-

dent; how, again, some things can be steered to intelligent purpose and others be only random happenings. It is certain that some regions of the universe reveal a moral law of gravitation, that in some areas the eternal plumb-line is set up and operates inevitably. It may be that it does everywhere. It is the safest guess. In his famous Romanes Lecture of 1893 —"Evolution and Ethics"— Huxley comes face to face with the immense ground swell of ethical purpose and moral process in the world and he tries to discover its source and origin. He thinks that it cannot be cosmic; it cannot belong to the nature of things. It must have come in afterwards; it must be superposed upon a non-moral "nature." But this conclusion of the perplexed naturalist will hardly do. The cosmic records need to be more closely and carefully searched again. It may be after all that the prophets are right, and that the plumb-line which Amos saw is fixed in the very cosmic nature of things.

II

THE FACT OF MUST

Must is one of the easiest verbs in the English language to conjugate. It is gloriously defective,

with its one mood and one tense. But if ever a word weighed a ton it is this same little defective verb. We meet it at all ages and on all levels of life, and it holds us like a tested line of trench.

We very early discover that all mathematical facts not only are what they are but that they *must* be so. When we have once learned the multiplication table, we come to realize that it is good not only for the local latitude and longitude where we happen to live, but it holds for all lands and for all possible worlds. When we once find that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line we instantly see that it must be so everywhere and that if angels wish to take the shortest way home, they must fly in straight lines. When we prove that the sum of the angles in a triangle is equal to two right angles, we see that it must always and everywhere be so — even in a triangle with its apex at Arcturus and its base across the earth's orbit around the sun. All our sciences write *must* into all their laws, for a law is not a law until it carries *must* into all the facts with which it deals. And yet no person ever sees this fact of " must be so " with his eyes nor can he find it with any one of his senses. The only thing we can find with our senses is what actually happens, what is there now. We can never perceive what

must happen. Senses can deal only with facts, only with *is,* not with *must be. Must* belongs in a deeper, invisible world where mind works and not eyes. For ages men wondered what held the earth up in space. They always looked for some visible support. It was a giant like Atlas who held it on his back, or it was a huge tortoise, or it was an elephant standing on another elephant, with elephants all the way down! But it turns out that nothing visible or tangible is there. The discoverers of the North and South poles found no real "poles" that ran into grooves on which the earth spun round. There was nothing to see. The cable which holds the earth in space and swings it on its mighty annual curve is invisible to all eyes and yet it holds irresistibly, for the *must* of a universal law is woven into it, and the mind can find it though the eyes cannot.

There is another, and a higher, kind of *must* which holds men as that force of gravitation holds worlds. It was one of the most august events of modern history when a man in the light of his own conscience challenged the councils and traditions of the Church, refused to alter the truth which his soul saw, and boldly declared, "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise." This is a strange thing, this inner "must," this adamantine "I cannot do

otherwise." It reveals a new kind of gravitation toward a new kind of center, and it implies the existence of another sort of invisible universe in which we live. It often carries a person straight against his wishes, into hard conflict with his inclinations, and it may take him up to that perilous edge where life itself is put at hazard.

> "Though love repine and reason chafe,
> I heard a voice *without reply;*
> 'Tis man's perdition to be safe
> When for the truth he ought to die."

Some persons do not feel this irresistible pull as powerfully as others do, but probably nobody, who can be called a person, altogether escapes it. A little boy, in the first stages of collision between instinct and duty, said naïvely to his mother: "I've got something inside me I can't do what I want to with!" This is exactly the truth about it. It holds, it says must, like the other invisible realities that build the universe.

Different individuals feel this inner pull in different ways. They read off their call to duty in different terms. Their *must* confronts them in unique fashion, but whenever it comes and however it comes, it is august and moving. We no doubt mix some of our cruder self in it and perhaps

we color it with the hue of our human habits, but at its truest and its best, it is the most glorious thing in our structure and it closely allies us to a Higher than ourselves.

> " So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
> So near is God to man,
> When duty whispers low, ' Thou must,'
> The youth replies, ' I can.' "

III

WHERE ARGUMENTS FAIL

There are some matters, and they are just the most vital ones, which lie too deeply embedded in the sub-soil of life itself to be settled by debate. Coleridge was in the main right when he made the distinction, so famous in his religious prose writings, between reason and understanding, or, as it might be put, between reason and reasoning, i. e., logical argument. A position may be grounded and established in reason and yet at the same time lie beyond the sphere of argumentative debate. The range of logical proof is notoriously limited. One explanation of this situation is that " thinking," " reasoning," " speculation " is a late-born faculty and capacity. There was a time when there was no need for it. Instinct served every

purpose. Life was simple and of all things practical. Action was the all-important thing, and primitive man was organized, in fact pre-organized, to *act*. Thinking was a useless luxury, as unnecessary for the function of living as a steamer-trunk would have been, or a grand-square piano. When thinking by the use of abstract concepts did come into fashion, after life had gone on a long time without such a luxury, it helped solve some problems, but it worked successfully only for problems of a limited scope.

Long before thinking or speculation had achieved any marked successes, long before man had learned to argue for the mere fun and fascination of the thing, that other strange trait of human life had flowered out — the tendency, I mean, to feel the *worth* of things, the power to appreciate values. This is even more distinctive of man, a more fundamental trait of personality, than thinking or reasoning is. It was born when *man* was born — it is as immemorial as smiling or weeping. It is rooted and grounded in reason but it is not due to reasoning.

By the worth or value of a deed, I mean its significance for the realization of the highest good of life. It is a sense of appreciation of what ought to be in order to bring life on toward its fulfillment.

In a complex life, like ours, a person will obviously have many ends to live for and many scales of value, but gradually lesser and lower ones will fall into place under wider and higher ones and thus we form a kind of hierarchical scale of values, with some over-topping end of supreme worth dominating our life and creating our loyalties. We discover for instance that life is more than meat or body than raiment, that mere survival yields to struggle for the life of others, and that sometimes life must be given for something worth more than life.

But, as I have said, this sense of worth is not a product of reasoning. It attaches rather to the great instinctive and emotional springs which gradually become organized through experience, life and action. It works as a deep-lying inner ground-swell, pushing in a definite forward direction, rather than as a logically conceived plan which can be settled and verified by argument.

"I see my way as birds their trackless way."

The first and most fundamental law of consciousness in its primitive stage, whether in that of the child or the race, is the inveterate tendency *to organize activity*. This principle operates before the child begins to *think* or to aim at conceived ends. At the very first, instincts are defi-

nite, simple ways of acting for definite simple ends. Then unconsciously, but with momentous results, the child begins to group impulses and instincts into systems of interest, little empires which now direct action. Simple functions converge into organizations or systems of instinct and emotion, or purposeful efforts. Little by little these primary systems of action widen out, expand, enrich, and become informed by experience and ever after lie deep down at the roots or springs of will and of personality. From first to last our life values, our sense of worth, are formed and shaped in this deeper region below the level of conscious reflections and reasoning. They are always operating, they are always playing the main part or rôle in the active drama of our life, but they seldom *appear* as actors. The sentiments, again, are only wider systems or groups of these springs of instinct and emotion, more or less profoundly rationalized through experience, the experience of the individual and the race. They are among the most positive forces within us which move to action, but they lie too deeply embedded in the fundaments of our being to be easily recast. Persons of a certain type often sneer at "sentiment," and at what they call "sentimental" attitudes. They probably refer to excessive emotional tones

and seeming lack of rational basis. It is true no doubt that sentiment is sometimes thin and "gushing." But the great sentiments which more or less rule our lives are immense realities to be reckoned with. They are the widest and most inclusive organized systems of action operative in our lives. They furnish us with our supreme values. They move, like great subterranean ocean currents, through all the activities of our being. In them all our loyalties are born and by them are enlarged and enriched. Love, patriotism, devotion to truth, æsthetic appreciation, passion for goodness, religion in all its range and heights, are such sentiments. They represent the organization of many instincts, emotions and attitudes, unified, fused together and sublimated by reason. They give meaning and value to things we care for. They determine our pursuits. They kindle our loyalty. They gird us and carry us forward to our various goals. Arguments change our intellectual conclusions and affect our decisions in many spheres, but they do not often reach this more central region where we live and have our being. The great loyalties are only slightly touched by logic. They lie deeper down in the slowly formed systems of instinct, emotion and will, where our estimates of values are created. We do not expect

to be asked *why* we love our child, we do not rise to explain *why* we are ready to suffer for truth, we do not give any rationalistic account of devotion to country or of dedication to God. They seem to us inevitable and self-explanatory.

What will eventually rise to the apex of a person's hierarchy of values cannot well be predicted. Here men differ. There is no absolute arbiter of values. Should Galileo put devotion to truth above loyalty to his Church or not? Does one's moral obligation outrank the requirements of love? How do the claims of country take grade with the soul's interior conviction of what is due to God? The answers vary. But one's course here is not settled by debate. Some overtopping loyalty rises in us and holds us as invisible gravitation holds the earth in its orbit. Our ideals, our convictions, our elemental faiths root back into the lives of ancestors and martyrs. They were builded into our lives along with the alphabet. They have silently grown and twined into the inmost fiber of our being, and out of these deep roots of life one's supreme loyalty flowers forth. It is very solemn and sacred business. In the hour of crisis the sincere, honest person feels as he makes his choice, amid the conflicting issues, that he cannot do otherwise. To make a different decision,

he would need not a new argument, but a change of personality, an alteration of all the values of life.

IV

THE MEANING OF OBLIGATION

One of the ultimate problems of ethics is the problem of moral authority. From whence comes the moral imperative? What is the origin of that august thing we call "obligation"? Who lays upon us the unescapable "thou must," or "I cannot do otherwise"?

In the early stages of the moral life, whether in the case of the child or of the race, duty seems to come from beyond, from outside. It is something imposed by a foreign will. It is not yet something self-chosen, or loved for its own sake; it is something stern and harsh and forbidding which lies like a specter across one's path, asking to be done, and it is backed and buttressed by a sense of fear. The will that enjoins it has the dread power to enforce it, and dire results will follow if one runs away from duty or takes a shun-pike around it. This is the legalistic stage of ethics, which has had an enormous part to play in the discipline of the child and of the race, and which lingers on as a

relic or survival in the maturer life of multitudes of people. Duty at this stage is always characteristically *negative* in its form. It limits, restrains, and restricts. It confronts individual impulse with an authoritative command which says: "Thou shalt not." It is a stage of life which divides persons into two absolutely sundered classes — the sheep and the goats, i. e., those who say "yes," and those who say "no" to the enjoined law of righteousness.

But however important this moral stage of life is, it is not yet the goal of ethical personal goodness. No person is good, in the highest and richest sense, until he chooses to perform his deed because he feels its inherent *worth* as an aim of life, and selects it because he knows that it is a good act to put a life into. It is thus self-chosen, no longer a thing of foreign compulsion, and yet the compulsion and the authority remain as real and as august as ever.

The slow and gradual heightening of the ethical life, as it passes over from external authority, to internal, from negation to affirmation, from fear to joy, is one of the most splendid stories of human life. Little by little one discovers, as he lives and sees deeper into the meaning of things, that a life of duty is a life of largeness and freedom.

There would be no richness, no content, to a life that answered no calls of duty, a life that remained shut up in its own self. The only way to fulfill one's life is to forget about it and become absorbed in something beyond it, to take up a task which thrusts itself in the way, and to do it. After each such deed the doer discovers that, without aiming for this result, he himself has been enlarged and enriched by it. He has been more than conqueror. He is now himself plus the deed he has done. In doing his duty he has found himself. In the path of duty and in the way of obligation lies the road to the true realization of life and of its meaning, and in this vision love casts out fear, and joy supplants dread.

But if duty is not now imposed as an external law and is not laid on us by a foreign will which we must obey or take the dread consequences, where *does* the call come from, and why is it so august, compelling and authoritative? What, in a word, makes duty duty and why do we follow its call as though we could not do otherwise?

The answer, as I see the matter, is this: A mature moral man's duty rests for him on a clear personal *insight,* or vision, of the course which fits his life. It will be of necessity an action for the sake of an ideal, for action along the line of

instinct, i. e., along a line of least resistance, would not be called duty. It will not be an action for the sake of pleasure, nor will it be taken in order to forward self-interest, for acts of that nature are acts which do not bear the brand and mark of obligation. All our obligations are born out of our relationship with others. The very word obligation means "tied-in" or "tied together." As soon as we realize what fellowship means we awake to duties and we discover that we cannot follow any easy primrose path that ends in self. Duty is always done for a larger whole than one's own *me;* it therefore always does come from beyond, and it seems, thus, even in its highest reaches, to be laid upon one from without.

We are for purposes of life, bound in, not only with those who now live and who form our visible society, but we are bound in as well with those who were before us and with those who will be after us. Our lives are never isolated, except in mental abstraction, but we are in living fact conjunct with a vast social environment which shapes all our action and from which we draw all our ideals.

We catch our visions of life in a very especial way from the persons who are our heroes and models, or the persons who have in some way won in our thought a *prestige* and for that reason get

from us unconscious and joyous imitation. Living in admiration, as we do, of Christ, and loving him as we must, if we see what he was and what he did for us, we cannot help coming into life-contact and relationship with him, and in some sense his ideals become ours and his outlook on the world and his desire for an altered humanity possess us and control us and unite us in one larger whole with him, till we believe in his belief and leap in some measure to his height of living.

When in this intimate and inner way he becomes our leader we are no longer our mere selves. We cannot live now for pleasure or for gain or for self. His will becomes in some degree our will, and we go his way — not because somebody or some book forbids us to do otherwise, but because love constrains us and a higher vision of an ideal world compels us. This attitude, which holds one fast as adamant to hard and difficult duty, is not irrational but, when life is conceived in its wholeness, is gloriously rational. It is an attitude, however, which often perhaps is not arrived at by clear and linked steps of reasoning.

But though not articulately reasoned out, insights of this moral type may be as rational as the clearest logic. No one probably ever comes

to a decision to sacrifice his life for a cause or for a truth by the mere persuasion of logic. The heroes who died at Thermopylæ could not have "explained" the grounds of their decision. They followed an insight which was born out of their relation to a country and they could not do otherwise. If instead of having Sparta for their loved cause they had been bound into life with the Founder of the Kingdom of God their whole attitude would have altered. They would have leaped to the sacrifice with the same eager joy, but it would now have been a sacrifice of self to preserve and guard the principle on which the kingdom exists and grows — the principle of love, and that would be as rational as the other act actually was.

Sacrifice of self is a feature of all rich and purposeful life. The moment a person cares intensely for ideals he has started on a way of life that makes great demands and yet it is also a way of great joy. Nobody who *knows* would ever prefer the way of ease and quick reward. The law of the survival of the fittest throws no light here. "The will to live," or "the will to power," goes only a little way as an explanation of the processes of life. From somewhere a loyalty to

ends that are not of self has got into our human fiber, and we cannot live without obeying that loyalty to the ideal even though it cost all we have and all we are.

CHAPTER V

THE GREAT VENTURE

I

CONCERNING IMMORTALITY

We have heard very much of the problems concerning prayer during these years — how long they seem! — since the war broke in upon our old arrangements, and another problem has become perhaps still more pressing — that of immortality.

> The awed spirit holds its breath
> Blown over by a wind of death.

We have been living face to face with staggering conditions, and we have been closer neighbors to death than has ever been the case before since there were men. We have been forced to ask over again the immemorial questions of the human race and more urgently than ever the question which sooner or later every man asks of himself, "Do my loved and lost still live in another sphere; shall we find each other again, and will there be a real fulfillment and consummation of this incom-

plete and fragmentary earthly career?" No absolute answer can yet be given to that palpitating human question, though some genuine illumination relieves the otherwise appalling darkness. For many — in fact, for multitudes — the Easter message of the gospel is all that is needed. It is a pillar of hope and a ground of faith. It closes the issue and settles all doubt.

But in a world which has proved to be in the main rationally ordered and marvelously susceptible to scientific treatment, we should expect to find in the natural order of things some sort of rational evidence that the highest moral and spiritual values of life are conserved. Those of us who have been accustomed to knock at the doors of the universe for answers to our earnest questions can hardly help expecting nature to respond in some adequate way to this most urgent quest of ours. It is this rational quest of which I propose saying a few words.

There have been in the past, and there still are, two quite different ways of approaching the question of survival on rational grounds. We can pursue the method which is usually called empirical, or we can follow out the implications of the ethical life. The first method deals with the observable facts on which belief in survival rests.

In the primitive and rudimentary stage of the race dream experiences had important influence on the formation of man's ideas about the unseen world. In his sleep he saw again those who had vanished from his sight. His dead father appeared to him, talked with him, and even joined him in the chase. It was, however, a world quite different from the world of his waking senses. It was not a world which he could show to his neighbor, nor did it have the same rigid, solid, verifiable characteristics as did his outer world. It was a ghostly world with shadelike inhabitants. It was not a radiant and sunlit realm; it was dull and unlovely. But in any case most races reacting on dreams, and probably on even more impressive psychic experiences, arrived at a settled conviction that life of some sort went on in some kind of other world. The mythologies of the poetic races are full of pictures and stories expanded out of racial experiences. These psychic experiences have continued through all human history, and a large body of facts has slowly accumulated. In recent years the automatic writing and the automatic speaking of psychically endowed persons have furnished a mass of interesting material which can be dealt with systematically and scientifically.

It is too soon, however, to build any definite hopes on this empirical evidence. There can be no question that some of the reports which come from these "sensitives"— these psychically endowed persons — *appear,* to an unskeptically minded reader of them, to be real communications from persons in another world or, at least, in another part of our world. This is nevertheless a hasty conclusion. It may be true, but it is not the only *possible* conclusion that can be drawn from the facts. It is a mistake at this stage of our knowledge to talk of "scientific" evidence of survival. All that we are warranted in saying is that there are many cumulative facts which may eventually furnish solid empirical evidence that what we call death does not end personal life. But at its best the empirical approach seems to me an unsatisfactory way to deal with this problem. I should feel the same way about empirical tests of prayer. They do not meet the case. The real issue reaches deeper. We shall, of course, welcome everything which adds to our assurance, but I, for one, prefer to rest my faith on other grounds than these empirical ones.

Far back in the history of the race prophets appeared who inaugurated a new way of solving human problems. They discovered that man's

life is vastly greater and richer than he usually knows. There is something in him which he cannot explain nor account for, something which overflows and transcends his practical, utilitarian needs and requirements. He feels himself allied with a greater than himself, and his thoughts range beyond all finite margins. Eternity seems to belong to his nature. He cannot adjust himself to limits either of time or of space. These prophets of the soul's deeper nature, especially those in Greece, Socrates and Plato for instance, insisted that there must be a world of transcending reality which fits this depth of life in us. The moral and spiritual nature of man is itself prophetic of a larger realm of life which *corresponds* with this inexhaustible creative inner life. With this moral insight, immortality took on new meaning and new value. The life after death was no longer thought of as a dim, shadowy, ghostlike thing, to be dreaded rather than desired. It was now thought of as *the real life* for which this life was only a preparatory stage. Steadily this view of the great ethical prophets has gained its place in the thought of men, and the mythology based on dreams and psychical experiences has in measure lost its hold on those who think deeply.

It seems impossible to consider life — life in its

highest ranges in the form of ethical and spiritual personality — as a rational and significant affair unless it is an endlessly unfolding thing which conserves its gains and carries them cumulatively forward to ever-increasing issues. A universe which squanders *persons,* who have hopes and faiths and aspirations like ours, as it squanders its midges and its sea-spawn cannot be an *ethical* universe, whatever else it may be. It must have some larger sphere for us, it must guard this most precious thing for which the rest of the universe seems to be made. The answer to the question rests in the last resort in a still deeper question. Is there a Person or a Superperson at the heart of things, who really cares, who is pledged to make the universe come out right, who wills forevermore the triumph of goodness — in short, who guards and guarantees the rationality and moral significance of the universe? If there is such a Person, immortality seems to me assured. If there is not — well, then the whole stupendous pile of atoms is "an insane sandheap." That way madness lies. It simply is not thinkable.

But from the nature of the case these supreme truths of our spiritual life and of our deeper universe cannot be proved as we prove the facts of sense or the mathematical relations of space.

The moral and spiritual person must always go out to his life-issues as Abraham went out from Ur of the Chaldees, without "knowing" whither he is going. The moral discipline, the spiritual training of the soul, seems to demand venture, risk, the will to obey the lead of vision, faith in the prophetic nature of the inner self, confidence in "the soul's invincible surmise." I, for one, prefer the venture to empirical certainty. I should rather risk my soul on my inner faith than to have the kind of proof of survival that is available. What we have is so great, so precious, so loaded with prophecy of fulfillment, that I am ready to join the father of those who live by faith and to swing out on that last momentous voyage, not knowing altogether whither I am going, but sure of God and convinced that

> What is excellent, as God lives,
> Is permanent.

II

THE MIRACLE AGAIN

There are many things in this world, crowded with mysteries as it is, which impress us with awe and wonder.

Luther, at one of the most trying and discouraging periods of his life, wrote to a friend:

"I have recently seen two miracles. The first was that, as I looked out of my window, I saw the stars and the sky and the whole vault of heaven, with no pillars to support it; and yet the sky did not fall, and the vault remained fast. But there are some who want to see the pillars and would like to clasp and feel them. And when they are unable to do so they fidget and tremble as if the sky would certainly fall in. . . . Again, I saw great, thick clouds roll above us, so heavy that they looked like great seas, and I saw no ground on which they could rest nor any barrels to hold them, and yet they fell not on us, but threatened us and floated on. When they had passed by, the rainbow shone forth, the rainbow which was the floor that held them up. It is such a weak and thin little floor and roof that it was almost lost in the clouds, and looked more like a ray coming through a stained glass window than like a strong floor, so that it was as marvelous as the weight of the clouds. It actually happened that this seemingly frail shadow held up the weight of water and protected us. But some people look at the thickness of the cloud and the thinness of the ray, and they fear and worry."

Another great man who lived more than two hundred years after Luther, Immanuel Kant, used to say: "Two things fill me with unutterable awe, the silent stars above me and the moral law within me"; and most thoughtful persons must

have felt this speechless awe, I am sure, as they have looked up and looked within. But there is one thing which fills me with profounder wonder than Luther's rainbow bridge or Kant's silent stars, and that is the reawakening of the world in spring-time. It seems some of these mornings almost as though we might hear the sons of God once more shouting for joy as they behold the new miracle of re-creation going on. If we were not dulled by habit and made callous by seeing the miracle repeated, we should look upon this new stream of life with those large eyes of wonder with which the first Adam saw his fresh-made world. I am not surprised that men in all ages have taken this rebirth of the world in spring as a parable of a deeper rebirth. Long before there was a Christian Easter, with its symbols of flowers and eggs, men celebrated the opening of the flowers and the hatching of the eggs because they saw in these events a gateway into a deeper mystery and were touched with wonder as to whether the soul might not also have its reawakening and its new career of life. That Power that guides the unfolding of the acorn and pushes up the oak, that Mind that brings the gorgeous butterfly out of the dull cocoon and raises it to its new and winged career, may well know how to "swallow up mortality

with life" and bring us and ours to a higher stage of being. This new and greater miracle of another life beyond does not stagger us much after we have fully entered into the wonder of the spring. It is no more difficult to carry a soul safely over the bridge of death into the light and joy of a new world than it is to make a spring dandelion out of one of those strange winged seeds which a child carelessly blew away last summer. But here is the dandelion. It is "common" enough. We hardly stop to look down into its yellow face or to meditate on the wonder of its arrival over the narrow bridge of that flying seed. But if we could penetrate all its mysteries, could know it root and all and all in all, we could see through all the mysteries there are, and we should find it easy to say: "I believe in the resurrection from the dead, and in the life everlasting."

As far as we are able to discover, the soul possesses infinite capacity. A blossom may reach its perfection in a day, but no one has fathomed the possibilities of a human heart. Eternity is not too vast for a soul to grow in, if the soul wills to grow. Why, then, should such a being come and learn the meaning of duty, loyalty, sympathy, trust, and the other spiritual qualities, only to pass as a shadow? My answer is the one Browning

has given, that "life is just a stuff to try the soul's strength on."

"If a man die, shall he live again?" Our heart as well as our head seeks an answer. Knowing that such a hope is reasonable is not enough; we wish to feel that it is true. Here again God meets us, not only with an outward promise, or through the voices of nature, but with an inward conviction born of acquaintance with himself. We hear the answer when we first find him, but it grows as we learn to know him better. This is the apostle's assurance: "I *know* whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." "Learn of me," said the Master, "and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Yes, in this experience we even cease questioning. We know him and we trust. On his love we rest. Why should we reckon with the grave? Our Father this side shall be our Father beyond. We are trusting him here; we can trust him there.

CHAPTER VI

THE SOUL'S CONVERSE

I

PRAYER AS AN ENERGY OF LIFE

CLEMENT of Alexandria many centuries ago thought of prayer as "a mutual and reciprocal correspondence" or "inward converse with God." For this great Christian teacher prayer was not a solitary, one-sided act. It was a two-sided intercourse, a reciprocal correspondence, a real responsive relationship. This two-sided aspect has been recognized through all the centuries as an essential characteristic of genuine prayer. William James is expressing what most serious-minded men think when he says that religion would turn out to be illusory if there were no such thing as real, mutual, active intercourse between the human soul and God; if, as he declares, the intercourse be not *effective;* "if it be not a give and take relation; if nothing be really transacted while it lasts; if the world is in no whit different for its having taken

place." [1] In dealing for the present in this chapter with the psychological fact that prayer is dynamic, i. e., an interior heightening energy, I do not want any reader to assume that I am surrendering that other fact, equally essential to all real prayer, namely, that it is a mutual, two-sided correspondence.

It must, too, be taken for granted that prayer, true effectual prayer, has a range of influence far beyond the personal life of the one who prays. No person is ever isolated, unrelated and alone. He is bound in with the lives of a living group, an inseparable member of an organic fellowship. No man liveth unto himself, no man dieth unto himself and no man prays resultfully for himself alone. What we are and what we do flow out and help to determine what others shall be and shall do, and even so in the highest spiritual operations and activities of the soul we contribute some part toward the formation of the spiritual atmosphere in which others are to live and we help to release currents of spiritual energy for others than ourselves. If we belong, as I believe we do, in a real kingdom of God — an organic fellowship of inter-related lives — prayer should be as effective a force in this inter-related social world of ours as

[1] *Varieties of Religious Experience,* p. 465.

gravitation is in the world of matter. Personal spirits experience spiritual gravitation, soul reaches after soul, hearts draw toward each other. We are no longer in the net of blind fate, in the realm of impersonal force — we are in a love-system where the aspiration of one member heightens the entire group, and the need of one — even the least — draws upon the resources of the whole — even the Infinite. We are in actual Divine-human fellowship.

The only obstacle to effectual praying, in this world of spiritual fellowship, would be individual selfishness. To want to get just for one's own self, to ask for something which brings loss and injury to others, would be to sever one's self from the source of blessings, and to lose not only the thing sought, but to lose, as well, one's very self.

This principle is true anywhere, even in ordinary human friendship. It is true, too, in art and in music. The artist may not force some personal caprice into his creation. He must make himself the organ of a universal reality which is beautiful, not simply for this man or that, but for man as man. If there is, as I believe, an inner kingdom of spirit, a kingdom of love and fellowship, then it is a fact that a tiny being like one of us can impress and influence the Divine Heart, and we

can make our personal contribution to the Will of the universe, but we can do it only by wanting what everybody can share, and by seeking blessings which have a universal implication.

I am dealing, it must be remembered, with the dynamic aspect of prayer. Prayer releases energy as certainly as the closing of an electric circuit does. It heightens all human capacities. It refreshes and quickens life. It unlocks reservoirs of power. It opens invisible doors into new storehouses of spiritual force for the person to live by, and, as I believe, for others to live by as well. It is effective and operative as surely as are the forces of steam and gravitation.

The recent important psychological studies of prayer all agree in this one point, that most persons while engaged in earnest, sincere prayer feel an inflow or invasion of greater power than they were conscious of before they prayed, and Christians of all types and communions, of all lands and of all periods, unite in bearing testimony to this truth. "Energy," as William James says, "*which but for prayer would be bound, is by prayer set free and operates.*"

Frederick Myers was drawing upon his own experience when he wrote: "Our spirits are supported by a perpetual indrawal of energy and the

vigor of that indrawal is perpetually changing. . . . Plainly we must endeavor to draw in as much spiritual life as possible and we must place our minds in any attitude which experience shows to be favorable to such indrawal. *Prayer* is the general name for that attitude of open and earnest expectancy."

There can be no question that all effective dynamic prayer rises out of living faith. A person cannot let himself go and pour out his soul as he knocks at the great doors of the divine world unless he believes that there is a divine world that will be reached by his cry of need. We hear much talk in these days of the subjective character of prayer, but you cannot cut the subjective aspect of prayer away from the objective aspect and keep the former a thing of value and power by itself any more than you can cut the convex side of a curve away from the concave side and keep either a reality by itself alone. In order to have subjective results there must be live faith in an objective reality. A person cannot in this present world of gravitation lift himself by his belt or by his boot-straps, nor can he any more easily, in the inner world of spiritual facts, lift himself or others out of sin or sorrow or loneliness or failure or littleness by subjective strivings which attach to no

objective support beyond the margin of his own personal area. The moment the objective side drops out or is assumed to be illusory, the moment we convince ourselves that our Great Companion is only a dream of our own, we immediately fail to get dynamic effects from our subjective strivings. Brother Lawrence was right when he said: "It is into *the soul permeated with living faith* that God pours his graces and his favors plenteously. Into the soul they flow like an impetuous torrent, when it finds a passage for its pent up flood after being dammed back from its ordinary course by some obstacle."

We cannot live constructively toward any end of life as our operative goal or ideal until we can make that goal or ideal seem real to ourselves. It must not be vain or illusory if it is to hold us fixed and pointed toward it. It must not seem to us a will-o'-the-wisp, a mirage, if it is to control us and steer us forward through the storms and waterspouts of life. We build our lives by visions of real goals that are worth our venture and only so can we rise above the level of instinct, the dull bread-and-butter life. But what is true here in the field of ethics is also true in the realm of prayer. We must have faith in the Beyond. We need not wait until we can demonstrate the cer-

tainty of what the far-reaching tentacles of our heart feel to be real, but at least we must have a soul's vision of a More Than Ourselves to whom we turn, on whom we rely and from whom we expect what we need for ourselves and others to live by. The wonderful praying of the great mystics is due to their wonderful faith. They get what they seek because they expect to get it. They absolutely trust the far-flung tentacles of their soul. One of our American poets who was himself a mystic has well expressed this venture of "the soul's filament," the flinging forth of "the ductile anchor."

"A noiseless, patient spider,
I mark'd, where, on a little promontory, it stood isolated;
Mark'd how, to explore the vacant, vast surrounding,
It launched forth filament, filament, filament, out of itself.
Ever unreeling them — ever tirelessly speeding them.

"And you, O my Soul, where you stand,
Surrounded, surrounded, in measureless oceans of space,
Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing,— seeking the spheres to connect them;
Till the bridge you will need, be form'd — till the ductile anchor hold;
Till the gossamer thread you fling, catch somewhere, O my Soul."

Saint Teresa in a multitude of passages describing her experience of the effect of prayer always ascribes the reflex power to her own consciousness or feeling of the presence of God upon whom she throws herself. "I could," she says, "in no wise doubt, either that he was in me or that I was absorbed in him." I kept full of the thought of the presence of God, she says in substance. I labored to remove every thought of bodily objects and set myself to be recollected before him. I feel, she continues, a very deep conviction that God is with me when I pray and I see, too, that I grow stronger and better thereby.

Our surface life of effort and conscious striving is split up into many fragmentary aims and into many conflicting activities. We are carried about by shifting winds and by the drive of cross-currents. When we "return home," as the mystics say, to our deeper self and enter into our inner sanctuary we are borne along and unified by one great ground-swell longing for the life that is Life. We fall away from and lose our little self — our selfish self — and find a deep-lying conjunct or comprehensive self that is always more than we. In these truest moments of prayer a man comes upon that rock-bottom experience which a great

ancient soul had met when he said: "Underneath are the everlasting arms."

The unification of the usually scattered forces of our inner self, the concentration of all our powers toward one perfect end, the focussing of the soul's aspiration and loyalty upon one central reality that is adequate for us, the surrender of our own will to a holier and mightier will, produce just the inner conditions that are essential for the flooding in of spiritual energy, and for the release of it for others who are in need of it. Everybody knows what it is suddenly to lose all fears and fear-thoughts that have obsessed one and to rise up with courage to face the tasks that are waiting to be done. We have all some time seen the shadows flee away or we have seen them pierced by a light that obliterated the shadow and left us in possession of insight and a forward looking attitude which conquered the difficulty in advance. The literature of conversion is full of records of men and women, beaten and defeated, suddenly lifted to new levels of experience, put in reach of transforming forces, flooded with transfiguring light, convinced of new possibilities and becoming in the strength of the experience "twice-born" persons. When I speak of "unification" and

" concentration " I do not mean that they are the result of conscious effort. Quite the opposite is generally the case. There is no thought of what is happening to one's self in genuine prayer. The worshiper is utterly absorbed with God and with the joy and wonder of his Presence, and thus the usual strain and tension of thought fall away as they do also in the presence of an object of perfect beauty or when one is listening to great music. Just that cessation of conscious direction, that absence of conscious effort is probably the best way to secure the release of hidden energies within the subconscious life. Even the physical attitude of prayer, the release of all muscle strain in the eyes, the momentary exclusion of the whole sensible universe from the field of consciousness assist the worshiper to relax, to let go of time and space and to break through into the region where fresh currents of life are stored and circulate. Richard Cabot is undoubtedly right when he says in his splendid book, *What Men Live By,* that prayer fulfills what play and art and love attempt. It heightens, as those other higher attitudes and activities of life do, all our forces; it fortifies and reintegrates the self, restores the depleted energies, orientates us when we are lost, confused, or perplexed and it renews and heartens the soul, as sleep

does the body. Prayer is beyond question an energy-releasing function of life. It is as important for the health of the soul as exercise is for the body or as the fresh search after truth is for the mind.

One of the most interesting and valuable testimonies to the dynamic and curative character of the prayer of faith is that given by Dr. Theodore Hyslop, a specialist of great reputation in the treatment of mental diseases. Speaking at the annual meeting of the British Medical Association in 1905, he said: —

"As an alienist and one whose whole life has been concerned with the sufferings of the mind, I would state that of all hygienic measures to counteract disturbed sleep, depressed spirits, and all the miserable sequels of a distressed mind, I would undoubtedly give the first place to the simple habit of prayer. . . . Let there but be a habit of nightly communion, not as a mendicant or repeater of words more adapted to the tongue of a sage, but as a humble individual who submerges or asserts his individuality as an integral part of a greater whole. Such a habit does more to clean the spirit and strengthen the soul to overcome mere incidental emotionalism than any other therapeutic agent known to me. . . . I believe it to be our object, as teachers and physicians, to fight against all those influences which tend to produce either religious intemperance or indifference, and to subscribe, as best we may, to that form of religious belief,

so far as we can find it practically embodied or effective, which believes in 'the larger hope.'"

This is undoubtedly the case and it would not be difficult to gather a very large amount of concrete testimony to the reflex power of prayer upon the person praying. One of Professor James B. Pratt's correspondents declares that, although he is predominantly skeptical, at rare intervals he "stops fighting" and "relies on assistance," and he adds that at such moments he experiences "something like a movement of God" toward him. He feels "an immediate response." The result is "immediate quieting of the nerves" and the mental result is a reënforcement of courage. An anonymous writer in the New York "Outlook" a few years ago gave an impressive account of his own personal experience. He tells how again and again in moments of supreme doubt, disappointment, discouragement, or unhappiness a prayer uttered in faith has been followed by "quick and astonishing relief." He says:

"Sometimes doubt has been transformed into confident assurance, mental weakness utterly routed by strength, self-distrust changed into self-confidence, fear into courage, dismay into confident and brightest hope.

"These transitions have sometimes come by degrees —in the course, let us say, of an hour or two; at other

times they have been instantaneous, flashing up in brain and heart as if a powerful electric stroke had cleared the air, even as a lightning flash will dispel the darkness of densest midnight, or clear away grandly the murkiness of sultry August debilitation.

"These experiences have been marked in the very ratio of the emergency which occasioned the utterance of the prayer. Over and over again, they have come with such unexpected quickness and power that in justice to myself I could but rush to transcribe them, that in future times of distress I should have them to recur to. So marked have they been at times that I could simply say to myself, in a tumult of gladness, 'The age of miracles has by no means passed.' They have been followed often by a new outward buoyancy of spirit, even in those critical hours in which outwardly there was the greatest cause for a very different frame of mind. They have helped me through periods of bodily sickness, coming like great, glad breaths of fresh air after the smothering influence of an atmosphere charged with what was noxious."

The actual "law" by which such things happen so far escapes us. We know that there are reservoirs of energy waiting to be tapped and drawn upon, but for the most part we trudge our dusty highway and do not unlock the hidden door. We sometimes seal up the door and live on almost entirely forgetful and utterly unconscious of how near we are to help. "There are," as James

forcibly says, "in every one potential forms of activity that are shunted out from use. Part of the imperfect vitality under which we labor can thus be easily explained. One part of our mind dams up — even damns up! — the other parts." But to most of us who pray the door does sometimes open into larger, divine life and the strength floods back into us. Our judgment is clarified, our power to endure "the thorn in the flesh," or the crushing loss or the terrible separation is immensely enlarged, our resistance to subtle temptations is backed by unexpected aid, our conquest of pettiness and irritation becomes an easy matter and all our more ideal traits, for the time being, get their chance to come into full play. Exhausted, gone stale, fatigued with the strain and stress of standing the "weary weight of all this unintelligible world" we suddenly feel "the voiceless powers" of life flowing round our tired soul, reënforcements arriving to augment us and peace and love coming to blossom as though the climate of a divine world had flooded us with its spring.

> "How entered, by what secret stair
> I know not, knowing only He is there."

And what I have said of the inner transformation

through prayer is also true of the intercessory effect of prayer. In this world of inter-related lives one of us can "send his soul out" for the sake of others and the far-reaching results of such prayer are beyond question.

Pentecost is not a thing of the almanac. It is not alone an event of antiquity in an upper room in Jerusalem. It is the high-tide experience of this consciousness of inrushing life and power. Something like it has happened often to men who were not apostles. These men "of one accord in one place" pushed back a door and the flood swept in —"the Holy Ghost fell upon them." So, too, in all ages streams from the Beyond flow in when the door is really flung open, and men say even to-day that the Holy Ghost is an experience.

Prayer, real prayer, does "make a difference." Power to live by comes through this immemorial act of the soul. The discovery that we are in a world of law does not alter the fact. The irresistible evidence that the realm of nature is a realm where causation holds sway need not disturb us. Law and causation no more interfere with prayer than they do with love or with beauty. James Martineau has finely dealt with this point and his words are appropriate here. He says —

"God's rule of action in nature we have every reason to regard as unalterable; established as an inflexible and faithful basis of expectation; and, for that reason, not open to perpetual variation on the suggestion of occasional moral contingencies. God, however, is infinite, and the laws of nature do not exhaust his agency. There is a boundless residue of disengaged faculty beyond. *Behind and amid all these punctualities of law abides, in infinite remainder, the living and unpledged spirit.* Here he has made no rule but the everlasting rule of holiness, and written no pledge but the pledge of inextinguishable love; hence, without violated rule, he can individualize his regards; enter with gentle help; and while keeping faith with the universe, knock at the gate of every lonely heart."

There is no solid hindrance to prayer except ourselves. We ourselves raise the barriers and set up the obstacles. Still as of old the soul finds what it undividedly seeks, it gets what it persistently asks for, it brings open the door at which it unremittingly knocks. Everywhere in the universe the soul may have what it wants. If it hungers and thirsts for God, it will be fed with the bread of life and supplied with the water that satisfies. The difficulty is not objective; it is subjective. We so often do not really pray. We only say over words and call it "prayer." Let us instead learn to *pray*.

" I that still pray at morning and at eve,
Loving those roots that feed us from the past,
And prizing more than Plato things I learned
At that best Academe, a mother's knee,
Thrice in my life perhaps have truly prayed,
Thrice, stirred below my conscious self, have felt
That perfect disenthralment which is God."

II

PRAYER AND REFLECTION

There are multitudes of life functions which are simple enough and easy and natural, until we ask how or why we do them. They go on all right until reflection upsets them! I imagine the bird's homing instinct would be palsied if the bird reflected.

Not long ago, just at evening dusk, I heard a " honk-honk " in the air almost over my head. I knew at once what it meant — the wild geese flying by. Old memories came rushing back and with the enthusiasm of a child I ran out into the field to see the well-known V, with its leader at the angle, wheeling south. The thin fringes of ice on the northern lakes had warned them of coming trouble, and obedient to instinct they had started for the warmer lands. They did not *know* the way. They never would have started if they

had "reflected" on the difficulties of finding a path across fifteen states. They felt the strong push of infallible instinct. They obeyed its thrust and soon they were swimming on the warm waters of the sunny Florida lakes!

> "The centipede was happy, quite,
> Until the toad for fun
> Said, 'pray, which leg comes after which?'
> This worked her mind to such a pitch
> She lay distracted in a ditch,
> Considering how to run."

Zeno of Elis, in the early days of reflection, very successfully proved by an irresistible mathematically-sound argument that it is impossible to walk across a room. Diogenes solved the reflective dilemma by getting up and walking. Ever since this simple, practical experiment the world has cherished the proverb: "solvitur ambulando."

Many problems which reflection has forced upon us can be solved by a bold return to concrete experience and to spontaneous unanalyzed action, such as occurs under sudden inspiration. Adventure precedes knowledge in the order of our experience and a return to adventure often saves us from the perplexities into which excessive reflection has brought us. "To trust the soul's invincible surmise" and to go forward, like Abra-

ham, even without knowing the way or the country at the end of it, is one of the surest methods of conquering intellectual difficulties. Donald Hankey is emphasizing this aspect of adventure in life's highest concerns when he declares that "Religion is *betting your life* that there is a God" — risking neck and everything else on the high faith that "God will make the heavenly period perfect the earthen." "The spiritual life," as Professor Coe has somewhere said, "is strongest when it is most akin to habit and instinct." When one takes it apart and looks at it, it is hard to get it together again.

Worship is, I believe, as spontaneous and natural a function of the soul as is appreciation of love or enjoyment of beauty. It fulfills what play and art and music and love attempt. It brings joy, fortification and power. Worship is the joyous discovery of something very real and very near, which meets all the soul's deepest needs and which brings a spontaneous dedication of self to what seems the Highest. It is creative, refreshing, vivifying, quickening, dynamic, just because it is correspondence with the divine, energizing, recreative Spirit. William James is undoubtedly right when he says that prayerful communion "actually exerts an influence, raises our center of en-

ergy and produces effects not attainable in other ways."

Our main question, of course, is how to keep the way open and previous to this immense resource. So long as religious faith is *alive,* expectant and unopposed by intellectual inhibitions, times of worship are times of great joy. It is an experience which brings enlargement of life, spaciousness of mind, new dimension to the soul, a sense of breaking through the limits and of finding room for the soul; what a friend of mine has called "a hole in the sky." Times of communion with God are times when life comes to its full bloom and flower. Worship is the very crown of life. It is attainment. The soul for the moment has *arrived.* It has found the Kingdom of God. But our main problem here is with the intellectual inhibitions which blight or kill faith and so damp worship and make the way impervious to these great resources of the soul.

Long ago St. Augustine said: "One journeyeth to God not in ships, nor in chariots, nor on foot; for to journey thither to God, nay even to arrive there, is nothing else but to will to go!" If that is so the difficulty is with the *will.* But we now know that "willing" means the dominating prevalence of a live idea, its power to command

attention, its impulsion and coerciveness in the occupancy of the focus of consciousness. Let the thought of God as a personal presence once fill the mind with its warmth and intimacy of reality, let no rival ideas disintegrate this faith, this reigning system in consciousness, and worship, with all its constructive results, follows, as action follows any idea which dominates the focus of consciousness. Worship fails, however, as soon as the thought of God ceases to be a live, dynamic idea, as soon as the reality of a personal God in relation with our personal selves loses its power to command attention — ceases to make the will propulsive. We cannot live constructively toward any goal of life until we can make that goal seem real, vital and important to ourselves.

In this particular field, the field of worship, we inhibit our spontaneous instinctive tendencies to seek communion and fellowship with God by taking up reflective, intellectual theories of the universe, or of God, or of self, which banish God and make him unreal, remote,— no longer a live dynamic idea in consciousness. The fetters of the intellect become as strong as adamant, and as a consequence worship becomes difficult. These intellectual inhibitions are of many sorts and varieties, but in the main they come as by-

products of scientific conclusions or of inadequate epistemology, i. e., hampering theories of knowledge.

Science deals with the universe as though it were a complete, self-sufficient reality by itself. Cut apart from mind and reduced as it is to exact description and causal explanation it offers no scope for free events and it reveals no doors through which God could come into this world of law and mathematical order. Psychology, too, brings no relief. It studies the mind as a congeries of describable states and as completely a causal system as is the external world. Made rigidly scientific it leaves scope for no realities that are essential to the spiritual life of man.

Much of the current psychology tends to carry the limitation of knowledge still farther. Mind, according to this scientific theory, is nothing but an empirical product of natural process and is merely an efficient organ slowly evolved for recording sense-experience and arranging for immediate or remote behavior. We have no way of finding God — we are products of the earth's crust. The most we can do is to fool ourselves with a subjective idea of our own make! The fundamental mistake of all this pseudo-knowledge consists in supposing that the world which science

gives us is the actual concrete world, or that the mind which psychology describes is ever our concrete, active, inner life with its riches of experience, its creative power, and its deeps and heights, which no scientific category can handle. Science gives us in both these fields, as it must give us, an immensely reduced and transformed reality, fitted to categories of description, with all aspects omitted which cannot be dealt with in exact, ordered and universal ways. But the gravest difficulty comes (1) from the tendency to treat the fragment of a world cut apart from mind, reduced to mechanism, a world of causal equations, as though it were a complete whole; or again (2) the tendency to set up an abstract ego, "alone with its states," sundered from active commerce with the environment in which it lives, as though this psychic abstraction were the reality of the soul.

Nature in all these schemes is treated as though it were a complete system in itself which man views as a spectator *ab extra*. This course involves a fundamental fallacy — it produces a world as unreal as the "grin without a face" which Alice saw in Wonderland! It is like a convex side of a curve without any concave side!

The most important step back into life and into

faith and into living worship is the recovery or discovery of a spiritual conception of the universe. The way out is not by an attack on science or by a revolt from it, but by seeing that the real world in which we live is vastly more than the mechanism of matter and motion that submits to science. The real world is essentially organic with mind and mind with it, completing itself in man and revealing its significance through him. The only world we know concretely is this rich world of life and purpose and beauty and truth which is always a mutual fit with our minds and through the inter-relation of which both are revealed. There is thus no world sundered from mind and there is no mind that is not bound up with a world in the heart of which our consciousness is set. Well, this mind of ours with its inherent relations to the universe of nature, with its creative appreciation of beauty, sublimity and purpose, with its capacity to transcend the factual, and to live for what ought to be, with its sense of imperfection and its intimations of eternity, is not the abstract *psyche* which we study in psychology — i. e., a mere collection of states. Each finite self always involves and manifests an immanent principle which transcends the finite. We are plainly over-finite as we are over-individual. We each pre-

sent a unique focalization of a spiritual world, and something of the larger whole is revealed in the individual part, but full divine reality is adequately revealed only in the complete organic whole. "The open secret of the universe," as Professor Pringle-Pattison has recently said, "is a God who lives in the perpetual giving of himself, who shares the life of his finite creatures, bearing in and with them the whole burden of their finitude, their sinful wanderings and sorrows and the suffering without which they cannot be made perfect." In our highest moments we feel the significance of the whole organic reality, and we come into some sort of contact-relation with the Spirit of the whole, and we feel then as a child lost in a crowd feels when it finds its father. Until we have fathomed the deeps of the soul, then, have tracked its origin to this evolving dust-wreath of matter, have "proved" that it is only an empirical aggregation of states, with no power on its own acts or on the world and possessed of no inner way to God, we may well go on worshiping and drawing upon sources of spiritual life.

CHAPTER VII

CHRIST'S INNER WAY TO THE KINGDOM

I

"FROM ABOVE"

IT is a favorite idea of the author of the Fourth Gospel and the first epistle of John that one does not come into full possession of himself nor participate in an adequate way in the life of the kingdom of God until he has been "twice born." In the famous Nicodemus passage (John III. 3), which has figured more prominently in theology than almost any other passage ever written, the essential word is extremely difficult to translate. It is ἄνωθεν, which may mean "again," "anew," or it may mean "from above." The context would imply the meaning to be "again" or "anew," but throughout the first epistle by the same author the recurrent phrase is "born of God," i. e., born from above the natural order. In John I. 13 "the children of God" are de-

scribed as persons who are "born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of men, but of God," i. e., they are not merely natural, empirical beings, they participate in a higher order of life; they are born from above. This writer, in every part of his interpretation of spiritual, or eternal life, takes it as settled that something from beyond the man himself, as an addition of grace, must "come" or be "received," before one can attain the type and quality of life which Christ has inaugurated.

It is plain, without the suggestion of any theological theory, that the bundle of egoistical instincts and passions with which the once-born child is furnished when he arrives does not "fit" him for the kingdom of God, if the kingdom is to be thought of as a coöperative social group-life, of mutual interrelated service, whose spring and motive and power are love. That kind of world is not built out of beings who live by self-seeking, or self-regarding, impulses. From somewhere something "new" must come into play, something "higher" than ego-forces must emerge, if a "kingdom" is ever even to dawn. We must admit that something higher than these self-regarding impulses does "emerge" in the growing child. He begins at an early date in his unfolding

life — long before he is consciously religious — to reveal a capacity for love and to show signs of self-forgetfulness, of restraint and sacrifice, and of love, at least *en crépuscule*. And as life goes on unfolding in relationship with others, the signs of "other-regarding" interests and sympathies multiply. There is an immense amount of unselfishness in this human world of ours; and with all its evils, its positive sin, and its depravity, there is much that is sublime and glorified with love and tenderness. Where do these "higher" traits come from? Are they "natural" or are they "from above" and "of God"?

In asking this question in that form of hard and fast dilemma, we are making the answer to it more difficult than we need to make it. This is one of those situations in which instead of choosing "either — or," we may take "both." There is surely something "natural" about the highest spiritual life and there is also something transcendent about it, something "from above," something "of God," something which is most properly called "grace." First let us consider the natural aspect. In the synoptic gospels Christ with the utmost simplicity speaks of the life of the kingdom as though it were as natural as breathing. He calls his followers to live free, easy, natural,

spontaneous, undisturbed lives, like that of the lily or the bird, each of which corresponds, without strain or effort, with its true environment and so grows by normal, natural increments into fullness of beauty and completeness of function. He says that the little child, uncalculating, trustful, and natural, is the consummate type of the kingdom, and that without this likeness no one can ever be in the kingdom. He puts the emphasis constantly on the part which the will plays in human salvation. When asked if many are saved, his significant answer is, "Strive to enter in." He keeps saying that in the spiritual sphere one gets what he persistently seeks and knocks for and asks for. The eager, determined, importunate will to have the highest is a main factor in achieving it. The parable of the talents, again, brings out forcibly the value of cultivating, occupying, expanding one's native capacities. Nothing is more amazing in the immortal story of the prodigal than the simple statement that he came to himself and said, "I will arise and go to my father," as though it were the most natural thing to do. All the beatitudes attach to elemental, common, familiar traits of human nature. There is in the highest beatitude no leap from this world to some other world. Each of them starts with

an every-day quality of life. We do not need to wait for new heavens and a new earth before we begin to aspire after righteousness, or before we have a sense of poverty and failure and humility, or before we practice the ministry of peace and reconciliation. His fine figure from an older prophet, "A bruised reed will he not break, and a feebly burning wick he will not snuff out," seems to mean that nothing in our human lives is so small, or weak, or insignificant that he despairs of it, nothing but can be made a channel of use and power.

But all the time we have been calling these traits and qualities "natural" we have been smuggling in and implying the presence and influence of something which can never be explained or defined or accounted for in terms of matter, or in terms of purely natural, causal sequences, such as mathematical science deals with. Wherever unselfish, uncalculating love is in evidence, something from above has come in, something of God is there. Wherever ideals operate in a life and control lower instincts and carry the will straight against a course of least resistance, something not of the naturalistic order is revealed. Aristotle long ago insisted that the higher stages of thought and of the spiritual life cannot be explained θύραθεν —

i. e., by outside forces, or by naturalistic processes. They must have their source and origin in spirit and not in matter. And psychology to-day, if it were frank, would confess that brain-currents and molecular vibrations give no explanation of mental processes and give no clew to the real facts that concern us. In the last resort there is no explanation of any spiritual trait except in the light of spirit and in terms of spiritual influence. If something divine appears in the unfolding life of a child it is because "something from above," "something of God," has come, however silently and unconsciously it may have come.

Once we supposed that God and man were sundered and separated by a wide chasm — that God was "yonder" and we, alas, "here," in an undivine world. On that theory he could reach us and assist us only by miraculous intervention. On that supposition the natural was set sharply against the supernatural, which were insulated from one another. The traits of character which were mediated to the child through the group-life of the family, by imitation and contagion of influence, by impartation of ideas and ideals — all this was natural. "Grace," which brought salvation to the child, was wholly "supernatural."

It is much truer to hold that God is always here,

is always imparting "grace," is always ministering spiritual assistance to our lives, even in the most normal processes of it and where we built no altar to commemorate his presence. And where any soul reveals unconsciously the marks of grace, or has crossed the great divide without knowing it, or bears a shining face and wists not of it, there God has been working and something from above is present.

But there is still something more to say. There is another way to cross the great divide. Some cross it and know that they are crossing it. Some receive grace and recognize it as grace. Some feel invasions, are aware of a higher life which floods into themselves from beyond the margins of their personal area. They find themselves met and challenged by a voice not of their own lips. They are called out, as surely as the net-menders were, to follow the Christ whose love reaches them as a present fact. They seem to pass, by his help, from death to life, from darkness to light. Everything alters, the whole world seems changed and made new. They enter a new stage of existence and they seem to have emerged by a new birth into a higher way of living. Something of God, something from above, seems to have been added to their natural

self — and so, indeed, it has been. These are consciously "twice-born" souls. Are they of a higher spiritual order than the souls who cross the great divide and do not know it? Not necessarily so. They are probably more intense, more dynamic, more convicting in their influence — but not more completely saved and not, I surmise, any more precious to the heavenly Father. Any way that makes a soul Christlike, Godlike, is a good way, and therefore is orthodox. Some souls leap from one level of life to another; others go the slow, spiral way up. But none goes from sin to glory without God and his grace; and when anyone arrives there, with the new name and the shining mark on his forehead, he will be met with the joyful words: "My son was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found." And that is enough.

II

LIKE LITTLE CHILDREN

Christ makes "becoming like little children" a condition of entering the kingdom of God. It is certainly a strange and challenging statement. He cannot surely mean that a child is better than a man, that there is no gain in progress, that we

are nearer the goal of life when we start than when we end!

It seems fairly clear as a principle that we do not increase the worth of life by reverting to its beginnings. It is our destiny to go forward, not to turn backward. The time-series is not in any case reversible. Space can be traversed in either direction, but time runs only one way — onward. We cannot go back if we would. Few of us, however, would go back if we could. We have caught the idea that life is a cumulative affair as it advances. It gathers up and preserves its gains. It grows richer and more expansive as it goes on. Not in childhood, surely, is life truly revealed. Innocence is not to be compared with holiness; negative virtue is far beneath tried and tested character which has faced temptation and triumphed. We do not expect now to find Edens and golden ages by going backward; we seek them rather in the future. They are the achievements of the race, not the starting-points. We have come to see that we cannot get a perfect Church and ideal conditions of Christianity by attempts to revive or restore primitive, apostolic Christianity. It cannot be "restored." We must go on and build the ideal Church. We must advance and achieve a Christianity which will spiritualize

the race and be adequate for the needs of humanity. No mere restoration of the Galilean conditions or the Corinthian type would do it. So, too, with our individual life, we cannot save it or make it fit for the kingdom by a return to primitive conditions, by a reversion to innocence, by a process of emptying the gains of life. St. Paul is no doubt right in declaring with satisfaction and with a sense of progress: "When I became a man I put away childish things." No one can ever miss the fact that this great apostle is always pressing forward, looking onward, not backward; leveling up, not leveling down.

What, then, do the great words mean, that "becoming like a child" is a condition of fitness for the kingdom? In the first place, it must be understood that "becoming like a child" is very different from being a child. We are not asked to revert to a past state; we are called upon to experience a transformation which proves to be a genuine advance. There are certain traits in the nature of the child which can be taken up by the mature person, reinterpreted through the gains of experience, and relived on a far higher level than was possible in actual primitive infancy. Napoleon, on the island of St. Helena, might have become in his spirit like a child, but even so he

would have been vastly different from the innocent child who grew up on the other island of Corsica. Any childlike quality which appears in a full-grown person will necessarily be reset and transformed because it will be taken up into a richer and more expanded consciousness than is possible in the mere child. Memory, too, refloods everything with new colors, and no state can ever be the same after memory comes that it was before it came.

One of the beautiful things about the little child is his simple, natural sense of the reality of God. He seems to have a kind of homing instinct which takes him naturally back to the Father, to the great Spirit from whom he has come. It is more than poetry to say that we come " from God who is our home." Child-minded George Macdonald has caught and expressed with genuine insight the child's feeling of wonder, awe, mystery, and divine reality:

" I am a little child and I
  Am ignorant and weak;
I gaze into the starry sky
  And then I cannot speak.
For all behind the starry sky,
  Behind the world so broad;
Behind men's hearts and souls doth lie
  The infinite of God."

Some such haunting, enwrapping sense of reality as that is a normal part of a child's experience. He may lose this native trust and confidence when reflection crowds out instinct. He may in later life learn to question and to doubt, but once his "east window of divine surprise" lay wide open toward God. To get that native sense of God back again, to feel the joy and wonder of untroubled, unclouded fellowship with the Great Companion is a tremendous gain. To stand once more at the doorway of the infinite is a heavenly experience. It is, however, not a "return"; it is an immense advance, for it glorifies the entire content of life and multiplies all the gains of the long journey.

Another beautiful trait of the child is the absence of introspection, self-consciousness. He is in the hands of larger powers than himself and his little aims of life are realized without worry or fret. Great instincts, far older than himself, carry him forward, he knows not how, to the ends which he seeks. To become like a child would be to attain the humble accuracy of instinct, to pass beyond the stage of fret and worry, of painful effort and reflective consciousness, and to reach the aims of goodness by a spontaneous, unerring, and uncalculating insight of life. The highest

stage of goodness is attained when the trail of the self no longer lies over our deeds, when we no longer bungle them through self-consciousness, when we hit the mark by a kind of second nature as unstudied and unconscious as the child's instinct is. But this attainment, this formed second nature, which is as accurate as instinct, can come only through process and achievement and effort. It is like a little child, but it is an advance, not a return.

III

THE INNER ISSUE IN GETHSEMANE

The secret of the cross is kept from age to age. Sermons are preached on it. Books are written about it. The church is built upon it. But it remains in good part a mystery still. Its meaning baffles us. It has a depth which we cannot fathom. Our theologies do not explain it. Our religious interpretations do not exhaust it. Something always remains over, which we do not succeed in putting into words or even into thoughts. The cross is our most common religious symbol, and yet we do not penetrate very far behind the symbol. It has been interpreted more often than any other Christian symbol has been, and yet we

wait for an interpretation which will satisfy us.

What we really want is the inner meaning. We seek for a revelation of what was in Christ's mind as he faced the issue and accepted the cross. Theories about it often seem artificial and constructed to explain away an intellectual difficulty. For him it was a vital fact, not a theory. He went forward to the cross because he saw that it was necessarily involved in the life which he was living. We should need to understand his mind and in some measure feel what he felt with that pain and stigma and defeat close in front of him and with no way around it.

"Have in you," St. Paul says, "the mind which was in Christ Jesus . . . who became obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross" (Phil. II. 5–8). That "mind" is exactly what we are seeking for. We are trying to catch the secret and to find out what was in his mind as he prayed in Gethsemane and walked under his wooden beams to Calvary and felt the nails pierce his flesh. Not a syllable is spoken which undertakes to say in plain words for wayfaring men what the deep experience meant. But perhaps we can come close to the heart of its meaning if we try to live our way into the agonizing utterances which break out and reveal at least dimly what

he was feeling as he went steadily on with his supreme venture of love.

Mark's wonderful words are most vivid and significant: "And they were on the way, going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus was going on before them: and they were amazed; and they that followed were afraid" (Mk. X. 32). Here are no words from him at all, but something new is in his face which all the followers have noted. They plainly see that this is not a mere stage in an itinerary. It is a crisis in his resolution, a turning point in his life. His *mind* is made up. He has counted the cost. Each step forward now is toward the cross and he outdistances the scared disciples who timidly follow on behind him in wonder and immense fear. Later on the way, he asks his most intimate and inner circle of friends if they can drink his cup and be baptized with his baptism. They *think* they can endure it and go through with it, though they evidently had only a vague and dim idea what it meant in spite of the ominous signs, for they were plainly meditating on glory and triumph. He, on the other hand, was altogether concerned with the supreme law of the spiritual life which his whole teaching and practice in Galilee had expressed and illustrated: "He that loses his life, the same

shall save it." "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" i. e., the very thing that makes life life. If thy hand or thy eye hinder thee in the pursuit of thy spiritual goal, cut the one off and bore the other out and fling them away. It is better to *enter life* maimed and mutilated than to be "safe" and miss it. "The Son of man came to minister and to give his life for others." At no point did Christ reverse popular opinion more completely than in his insistence upon self-sacrifice as the principle of human redemption, of spiritual deliverance. It had been assumed too easily that the Messiah was to be a world-ruler, a greater David, who should break the yoke of the foreign oppressor by his *power* and restore the kingdom to Israel. All men were looking for a splendid and irresistible king of the Jews. The consternation of the disciples as the catastrophe came on and the jeer of the mob —"Himself he could not save"— reveal clearly how the tide of thought was running.

The issue, then, in the mind of Christ is sharply drawn between the popular expectation and the fulfillment of the principle of redemption which his own life embodied and incarnated. Gethsemane is, thus, the scene of the world's greatest

battle, though it is an inner battle. Two ways of life, as different as light and darkness, are here in conflict. If Christ shall decide to save himself from his hour, shall choose to escape from the agony which attaches to redeeming love and shall emerge from his struggles with his decision made to be the kind of Messiah the people want, then divine purpose, eternal love, and spiritual hopes for man will have been defeated. He feels that he could call down twelve legions of angels to deliver him from the cross, but that way of escape would not be victory — it would be a new triumph for the forces of evil. And yet the bloody sweat, the groans and cries of a soul in deepest agony show how real the temptation was, how unspeakably hard was the lonely testing.

On the other side of the issue the case stands clear. There was no way to save men from sin and selfishness without the appeal of the uttermost self-sacrifice, without the boundless cost of uncalculating love. The only way to win men, to redeem them, to lift them out of the lethargy and unconcern of worldliness, or out of the black depth of willful sin, is to make them see the tragic cost of sin, to create in their souls a passion for God and for holiness and purity of life. And only one thing will do that for a man — the discovery

that some one understands him, appreciates his condition, feels his defeat and still believes in him, suffers with him and loves him, just as though he deserved such grace. The way in fact to beget love in the soul of a person is to begin by loving the person and suffering with him and for him.

We can almost hear Christ saying in the dark of the garden, as he did say in the light of Pilate's palace, "For this cause was I born and to this end came I into the world." To turn away from *that* divine mission for any other goal was to accomplish defeat both for himself and for the race forever. Most like us he seems when the torn heart cries: "Let this cup pass, if possible." "Save me from this hour." Most divine he seems when he calmly says: "For this very cause came I unto this hour." "Thy will be done." He emerges from the crisis with the cross inevitable but with the victory clearly won. As at the beginning, so at the end of his ministry he has met the most subtle temptation to take an easier way to seeming victory and success, and instead he takes the road to Golgotha and risks his whole mission on the venture of suffering, sacrificial love, freely, uncalculatingly poured out.

There is one more single moment when the strain and agony sweep over him with insuffer-

able, overwhelming power and force from his lips the cry of anguish, "My God, my God, why hast *Thou* forsaken me?" But it is only for a moment. The great loving soul immediately comes into full possession of itself and of its spiritual resources, and calmly recognizes that love abides unsundered and eternal: "Into thy hands, O my Father, I commit my spirit."

Here, then, is love, not that we love him, but that he loved us, stood at the most critical parting of the ways of life, faced the deepest issues in the universe and gave himself in unswerving faith that love would conquer.

CHAPTER VIII

JESUS CHRIST AND THE INNER LIFE

I

IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

It is a good sign of spiritual progress that our generation has become deeply, genuinely interested in the interior aspect of religion. We do not feel as certain as Christian thinkers in other epochs have felt that we can expound the entire nature of God and man and the cosmos from texts of Scripture. We are not optimistic in our expectations that we can explore all regions of the universe with our logic and bridge all the dizzy chasms of speculation with syllogisms. We modestly tend to return home and to explore our own inner domain. We are eager to discover the primary facts of our interior life and to follow out the clews and implications of our own indubitable experience. The laboratory method has carried us so far in other fields and has enabled us to speak with such coercive authority that we are

naturally ambitious to apply a kindred method to religious life, and to find some central truths of the soul which can stand all probings and all tests, and which carry a similar conviction to that which the demonstration of experiment carries. We cannot perhaps expect to travel very far yet in the religious field with the slower, surer method of experiment and experience. We shall hardly be able to match with our method of experience those daring feats of logic which marked the great epochs of theology, but we may nevertheless accomplish a few simple and essential things which logic seemed always to miss. Emerson's *Fable* of "the mountain" and "the squirrel" may be appropriately applied to stand for grandly-swelling *logic* on the one hand and for humble inner *experience* on the other.

"The mountain and the squirrel
Had a quarrel,
And the former called the latter 'Little Prig';
Bun replied,
'You are doubtless very big;
But all sorts of things and weather
Must be taken in together,
To make up a year
And a sphere.
And I think it no disgrace
To occupy my place.

If I'm not so large as you,
You are not so small as I,
And not half so spry.
I'll not deny you make
A very pretty squirrel track;
Talents differ; all is well and wisely put;
If I cannot carry forests on my back,
Neither can you crack a nut.' "

The foundation fact for this experimental way is the fact of an immediate inward revelation of God within the sphere of personal experience. The person himself undergoing this experience feels as though the Fountain of Life itself had somehow burst into the rivulet of his own consciousness and was flooding him with the elemental energies of a world more real than the one we see. This experience, which those who have it call " the experience of finding God," is extraordinarily dynamic. It is attended by a release of energy, by the opening out of new dimensions of life, by a greatly heightened *élan* of joy, by the discovery of unusual power to endure hardship and suffering, by an increase of insight and wisdom and by a sudden increment of love and grace. There is of course no way to appreciate the full value of an experience like that *except to have it.* Like the *feel* of one's own hat on his head, or like

the rapture of seeing the Grand Canyon, it cannot be completely translated into the categories of description or turned into the coinage of communicable thought. As flowers can give poets thoughts that do lie too deep for tears, so, too, there are events within our own souls that cannot be put into the *patois* of any human speech. And yet if these inner events are real and transforming we should certainly be able to speak intelligently about them as in all ages men have succeeded in speaking of love and beauty and other similar realities which exist only for appreciative spirits. The New Testament which is the supreme source for many other aspects of Christianity is also the richest source of material for the study of this first-hand religion; this religion of the experience of God; this religion which is concerned with the formation of the inner life. But the religion of the New Testament is too rich and many-sided to be reduced to one single type. It is profoundly inward and mystical, but it is at the same time outreaching and social. It brings enlarged vision and it stirs the deepest emotions, but it also moves the will to action. It calls all the aspects of personality into full function and it is the spiritual activity of the whole life of a whole man.

The gospel of Jesus everywhere puts a very

strong emphasis upon "wholeness of life," as the normal result of the attitude of *faith.* It seems certain that this was a prominent note of the primitive teaching and a positive feature of the early Christian experience. "Art thou desiring to be made whole?" can be taken as a fundamental question of Christ to men. "Fear not she shall be made whole," is addressed not to one solitary case of need; it is the message of the gospel to everybody. Christ is always concerned to quiet strained nerves, to allay fear, to remove prejudice and suspicion, fret and worry, strain and anxiety. But he also goes farther. He regards health of body and buoyancy of spirit as the true normal condition of life, and he called men to a way of living which produced these results. Pythagoras taught the novel idea, many centuries before, that the various elements of the body could, through the attitude and disposition of the mind, be put into such relation or balance with one another that the body in its right form would reveal a harmony, like that of the musical scale, or even like that of the harmony of the planetary spheres. It is from this theory that we get our word *tonic* as that which puts the body into *tone,* or harmony.

Christ naturally, spontaneously, assumes that

men are to live in health and tone and efficient power of life. His gospel is in this fundamental sense *tonic*. It aims at nothing less than an integral wholeness of life, a harmony of outer and inner self, a freedom from all physical hindrances except those which are a necessary part of finite and limited existence and a complete possession of the potential powers of personality. That way of living seems to have been the normal course with him, and one of the most striking effects of his relationship and fellowship with men was this fundamental tonic effect upon them. He organized their potential powers. He liberated the forces of which they had been unconscious. He made them whole. He gave them health. He actually produced what Clement of Alexandria, two centuries later, called "harmonized men."

The more intimately and adequately we study the sayings of Jesus and the more deeply we penetrate the heart of his message, the more clearly we see that the Kingdom of God which he proclaimed cannot be exhaustively conceived in political terms, or social terms, or economic terms, or ethical terms, any more than it can be in terms of eschatology. The "sermon on the mount" is not truly comprehended when it is called "a

new law" or when it is treated as a collection of ethical injunctions. All his sayings can, of course, be taken at different levels. It is possible to find what look like legalistic commands and to pick out words that seem to justify a definite social and economic scheme, as it is also possible to sort out an eschatological strand. But as soon as one begins to sound the real depths of his message in sermon or parable or conversation it becomes clear and plain that he is dealing primarily with those things which lie at the root and basis of personal religion, the fundamental disposition of the soul, the elemental conditions which have to do with the formation of the inner life. No change of dynasty, no acts of legislation, no scheme for the redistribution of property and income, no proclamation of social panaceas, no translation even from this world to another world, can bring the Kingdom of which he persistently speaks. It begins, and it must begin, first of all as a *spirit,* as an attitude of soul, as an inner experience of God. The Kingdom of God in its first intention is a certain kind of inner life — "the Kingdom of God is within you." It presupposes the recognition of a higher will than our own with which we desire to coöperate; it implies the discovery of a spiritual realm of Life which is

engaged to fulfill for us the incompleteness and failure of this world where we toil and suffer, and it means, too, that we know already enough about this higher realm of Life to say, "Abba," when it surges into our souls, and to live in a joyous Father-son relationship to the perfect will of the deeper universe.

Every step and stage of Christ's life, every act and declaration of his, gives us the impression that he is in personal relationship with this deeper universe. It comes out not merely in the synoptics' reports of striking auditions on momentous occasions — at the baptism and transfiguration, for example — when he seemed to hear the words of approval, "this is my beloved son." It appears, again, not merely in that confident conviction which he felt in Gethsemane that he might, if he would, summon twelve legions of angels to save himself from his hard path of suffering. It is in the very atmosphere and color of the whole gospel narrative. His consciousness, so far as we can sound it through these wonderful words of our accounts, always reveals *the Abba-experience, the Father-son relationship.* The world in which Christ lives is never confined to the hills and sky of Palestine, to the walls and streets of Jerusalem, to the policies and the armies of the Roman Em-

pire — in short, to any aggregations of outward and visible realities. His world always includes a realm of spiritual facts which are more certain than any outward things, and the most certain fact of that inward realm is the near access of the Father-God who is the source and ground and substance of his life. His simplest words are loaded with a power of life that comes and can come only from experience of God. Everything he says is reënforced by the vast background of experience out of which it springs. We are moved as we listen, not alone by the "authority" and the "grace" of these sayings, but still more by the interior depth of the personal life from which the words come. His life floods through all his words. The energy of his will and his unalterable purpose to stake the inauguration of his Kingdom absolutely on the conquering power of love and suffering and sacrifice give us an overmastering sense of his inward conjunction with the Father who can be revealed only in this love-way. His method of prayer as refreshment, reenforcement and vital correspondence, like an open window, allows us to form a very clear impression of that interior fellowship with God upon which and by which he lived. Whether the prayer-experience is attended by radiations of

light, as at the transfiguration, or whether it is marked by an agony of bloody sweat as in Gethsemane; in both cases the central fact which breaks through is his calm reliance on invisible forces and his unfaltering assurance of intercourse and communion with One who loves and cares and knows and works and whose way of life reproduced in men *is the Kingdom of God.*

The Beatitudes of the Gospel furnish us with a window, which looks in upon the possible inner palace of the soul which Christ means to build there. No words were ever simpler than these "sayings," and yet no words were ever more profound and wonderful. This inner palace, like Aladdin's, is built out of invisible and viewless material. The whole mighty thing consists of nothing but qualities of character, attitudes of will, traits of disposition, aspirations of heart, the set and trend of inner currents. Salvation, in this brief account of it, is not thought of as admission to some celestial city, or arrival at some peaceful Avilion of the soul,

> "Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
> Nor ever wind blows loudly."

It is rather the formation of an inner self of such a sort that *blessedness* inherently and automati-

cally attaches to it. Consciousness of insufficiency and need; childlike dependence on higher wisdom; trust and confidence in the love and power of God; willingness to suffer wrong and to endure seeming defeat rather than to take short-cuts to easy success; the spirit of meekness, patience and mercy; hunger and endless aspiration for fullness and beauty of life; sensitiveness of heart to the environing, invading Life of God, passion of soul to share in the service of peace-making love and to take up the burden of the world's suffering, and, finally, quiet endurance of misunderstanding and abuse with unstinted forgiveness of spirit — these things form for Christ the stuff and material of the life which is of the Kingdom and in the Kingdom and which has the blessedness of heaven now and the potentiality of infinite expansion.

We do not discover the full richness of the inner life as Christ reveals it until we take the measure of it in terms of the love which he expects of us. "You are to love," he says, "*even as* I have loved you." There are no other words of his quite so tremendously costly in their demands of consecration upon us as these, and at the same time no words which reveal such immense faith in the inner possibilities of men like us. We are not merely expected to do as we would be done by.

However golden that rule of conduct may be, it is not the full Christian measure of life. For our true way of life we look, not at our own feeble imaginings of what we should like done to ourselves, we look at this inexhaustible inner wealth of sympathy, and insight of understanding, and appreciation, and tenderness, and uncalculating love and readiness for the uttermost sacrifice to make love effective — this is the way, and this is the full measure of the length and breadth and depth and height. Even this is expected of *us*.

One cannot too strongly emphasize the part which Jesus assigns in his " sayings " to the *energetic will* in the formation of the inner life. It is the strenuous man, strenuous even as the conqueror of cities, who takes the Kingdom by siege. The soul can always have what it wants, many " sayings " tell us, but the *want* must be single, unintermittent, unyielding, and washed clean of all indecision and wavering. The man who sets out on this aim at complete spiritual life, life that is perfect as the Father in heaven is perfect, must be ready to surrender absolutely everything that threatens to hamper him in the pursuit of the soul's fixed goal. It cannot be attained on any fifty-fifty scheme — half of the life set upon the world and half of it focussed on God and the life

rich in God. The all must be given for the all.

There is a fine phrase in the brief account of Brother Lawrence, the Flemish quietist of the seventeenth century. The passage to which I refer says that the brotherhood noticed in this simple unlearned man "an extraordinary spaciousness of mind." "Spaciousness of mind," or what William James called "a new dimension of life," is one of the most impressive effects produced upon the soul by the discovery of Christ. The handicaps and limitations that usually beset fall away,

> "The heavy and the weary weight
> Of all this unintelligible world
> Is lightened,"

a door in the universe somewhere seems to push back, and widen out the area of inner space where the soul lives. It is, in some real sense, an experience of God and it always brings, when it comes, an expansion of joy. Christ's disciples obviously had this experience in high degree. It is Luke who dwells upon this trait most. For him, the gospel is essentially "tidings of great joy." All heaven thrills with joy when a lost soul is found and restored. It is like the joy of the shepherd when he finds his lost sheep, or that of a woman when she recovers a coin, lost in the dirt

and rubbish of her oriental house, or, better still, it is like the triumphant joy of a father's heart when a child, lost by his own willful and stupid folly, comes to himself, makes the great venture of trusting his father's love and comes home. The joy, however, is not merely in the heavenly region — in the Father's heart — but there is a joy and enlargement of soul as well in the one who is " found." He knows that he was " dead " and now he is " alive again "! He was " lost " and now he is " found "! The broken alabaster box is the everlasting " memorial " of an inner transformation which opens out the sky, and makes " new heavens and a new earth " for a poor sinner when the love of Christ finds and saves her from herself. The tears that washed the blessed feet in the home of critical Simon were not tears of hard sorrow. They were the flooding forth of a new found soul that had burst its iron prison and had found the sun and life and love again and was saved through the creation of a redeemed inner self that delivered her from the old self of sin and death.

Strangest of all, Luke tells us that the disciples, after they had seen the visible Christ vanish forever from their sight, returned from Bethany " with great joy." Something had happened to

them under *that* open sky which gave them an enlarged spaciousness, a new dimension. They had lost, but they had found. Some kind of energy to live by had come into them and possessed them. Luke's narrative in *The Acts* continues the thrilling story of their liberated and enlarged inner life. The great spiritual fact of Pentecost was the consciousness, in this little band of believers, of the upwelling, inrushing of the divine Spirit. It was the epoch-moment when the first Christian group passed over from a visible Master and personal Teacher to an invisible and indwelling, but not the less real, Presence. It was a transforming event, not so much on account of the novel tongue-speaking and the visible phenomena, as because something dynamic and expanding came into their souls, as has happened many times since in the history of the Church, and prepared them for dangers and sufferings and labors in the midst of a hard and difficult world. They spoke the word now with boldness; they said with faith to the mountain of obstacles in front of them, "be removed and be cast into the sea," and it obeyed; they rose to a miracle-working spiritual life and, as always in the power of this enlarged area of life, they thrilled with joy, eating their meals together in gladness and sharing, with

inner happiness, all they had, for the sake of those who lacked, while their joy culminated in a simple *agapé,* or love-meal, partaken in the exuberant consciousness of fellowship with the living though unseen Lord of their lives.

II

IN THE WRITINGS OF ST. PAUL

Still more wonderful was the dynamic effect of the discovery of Christ upon the inner life of Saul of Tarsus. It is, I think, the top miracle of Christian history. It has become almost a modern truism that St. Paul's Christianity cannot be reduced to a system of theology. The most important feature of it is that vital, personal, autobiographic strand of his "gospel," as he calls it, which is primarily *experience,* "knowledge of acquaintance" rather than "knowledge about." There are no doctrines in his Epistles which are not, first of all, flooded and saturated with a life-experience, and therefore nobody ever can understand this spiritual conqueror of the Roman Empire who does not succeed in some degree in entering and appreciating his rich and abundant inner life.

It was St. Paul who first expressed for all Chris-

tendom the basic idea of our religion that the Person who had been for a definite historical period a visible, tangible revelation of God in the center of the little Galilean group has now become for us forever an invisible Life, an immanent Reality, the self-giving, endlessly revealing Spirit —"The Lord is the Spirit." St. Paul looks to this inward, resident Spirit as the supreme dynamic for moral and spiritual life. The "flesh," the stubborn hindrance to all goodness, can be conquered, even more than conquered, by the power of the Spirit of Christ working within the man and forming in him the character-fruits of Spirit. "The law of sin and death," i. e., the drag and the dominion of the sinful nature in us, can be completely broken, and full deliverance can be won, through inward coöperation with the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, as a fact within (Rom. VIII. 2). The central "mystery" which has been brought to light by the gospel is, he insists, the "mystery" of Christ in men —"Christ in you" (Col. I. 27). Life, in the light of this, takes on new and wonderful meaning, for it is nothing short of re-living Christ —"for me to live is Christ" (Phil. I. 21).

He has given us in Chapters III–V of 2 Corinthians an extraordinary interpretation of this "new

life," which is a wholly different biological stage from that of the "old life," i. e., the Adam-life. He contrasts it first with the life of the old legal, or Mosaic, dispensation. *That* was imposed from without upon the person. It always remained foreign and external to him. The motive was fear, fear of consequences, and the most which this system could do was to create a consciousness of failure, a conviction of sin and a desperate sense of the need of higher help. The glory of the new method, a far excelling glory, is *this,* that now the creative power is a vital, personal Spirit working within the believer and transforming him into a living embodiment and expression of the Christ-Life, so that wherever he goes he is an epistle of Christ in which everybody can read, clearly or dimly, the lines and the character of the Christ who is in him. He no longer needs to point to an external law as his standard, he does not find it necessary to carry a written tablet as a passport of his faith. His standard, his law, his ideal, his goal of life, is more or less revealed in his spirit, in his deeds, in his face, in his personality. As William Dell put it in the seventeenth century: "The true religion of Christ is written in the soul and spirit of man by the Spirit of God; and the believer is the only

book in which God himself writes his New Testament." The process of writing "the epistle of Christ," the New Testament in terms of personality, St. Paul says, is a double process, working both outwardly and inwardly. It is a transformation, ever increasing in glory and radiance, wrought out in the life of man as he lives responsively in the contagious presence of Christ, with all veils of prejudice lifted from the soul and with all the wrappings of contracting custom removed. The power of unconscious imitation changes, we know, even the animal into visible likeness to its environment. It transmits into the inner life of the mobile child the emotions and ideas, the speech and the manners of the family-group. It changes, too, St. Paul says, the beholder of Christ into the same image as that which he beholds, from glory to glory, while the Spirit of Christ working invisibly within pushes like a mighty tidal force toward the same end —" that Christ may be made manifest in our mortal bodies." In fact, by this process of the Spirit an inner man is built up which can not only *stand* the afflictions and tribulations of this present time, but can even defy death itself. In some way, perhaps no more mysterious than any other process of life, a permanent inside self — an inner man — is being

woven by the Spirit which will abide when the tent of the body falls away and dissolves — a covering so that the soul will not be "naked," a house of God not made with hands, but made of the incorruptible, indissoluble material of the heavenly realms of Spirit; and thus death becomes the complete liberation of our personal selves into real life —"mortality is swallowed up into life."

Now all this truth of Christianity which I have sketched as briefly and compactly as possible, rests for St. Paul, not upon the testimony of books, not upon the transmitted tradition of the primitive Galilean group. "I did not receive it," he declares, "from men," "neither was I taught it" (Gal. I. 12). It came to him as "revelation." It was a thing primarily of *experience*. His entire eternal hope rests upon "the earnest, or foretaste, of the Spirit" (2 Cor. V. 5).

The Stoic conception of God as Soul or Spirit of the Universe may unconsciously have influenced him. So, too, the experiences and practices of the mystery-religions may have had their suggestive influence upon him. But after all, the thing that counted most was his own undoubted personal experience of the invasion of God, the insurging of a divine Spirit which he identified with that Life that was personalized in Jesus Christ.

" God who said let there be light," he tells us, in his personal account of the " new creation," " has shined into our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ " (2 Cor. IV. 6); or, again, " It is no longer *I* that live but Christ liveth in me " (Gal. II. 20).

His whole system of ethical life grows out of the " new creation," produced within by the Spirit of Christ in the inner man. Evil is to be overcome by the inner forces of a triumphant goodness (Rom. XII. 21). Love, as the highest "gift," is formed within by the work of the Spirit and becomes the creative power not only of a new individual but of a new society as well. It overtops tongues and miracles, it surpasses prophecy and mysteries, it outdistances even faith and knowledge. It is the very inner substance of " the new world " which Christ is building out of men. Being rooted and grounded in love, Christian believers can comprehend together the breadth and length and depth and height and know the love of Christ which passes knowledge and be filled with all the fullness of God (1 Cor. XIII. and Eph. IV. 17–19).

It is, again, with St. Paul as with the Galilean group, an experience which brings expansion in

every direction. The spaciousness of mind which came to this tent-maker, when Christ came into him, has no adequate parallel. His soul burst out into new dimensions. He lived ever after under a vastly opened sky. He became so triumphantly radiant and joyous that neither beasts at Ephesus nor Judaizers in Jerusalem nor dungeons in Nero's Rome could hide the rainbow which overarched his life. "I can do all things through Christ, my strengthener" (Phil. IV. 13). "God always causeth us to triumph in Christ" (2 Cor. II. 14). "Rejoice always and again rejoice" (Phil. IV. 4). "All things work together toward good," and "The whole creation is waiting for the unveiling of sons of God" (Rom. VIII. 19 and 28). This is Paul's Ægean gospel, the gospel as it was interpreted in the cities around the shores of the Ægean Sea, and finally, a half century later, this truth was raised to its full glory in the fourth Gospel, which is also Ægean. It is once more the gospel of the Spirit.

III

IN THE WRITINGS OF ST. JOHN

This gospel, like that of Paul's, rests upon the central faith that God is an essentially self-reveal-

ing Being, flooding out as Light, coming into personal relation with us as Spirit, bringing into play new vital forces as Life and offering us the supreme moral dynamic as Love. Here in this culminating message of the New Testament the entire purpose of the incarnation is thought of as increase and expansion of Life: "I am come that men might have life and have it in abundant measure" (John X. 10). Here the synoptic concept of the Kingdom gives place to a new goal of life — a kind of life in its nature inexhaustible, divine in its origin and endlessly expansive in its possibilities. This is now called *eternal life.* It does not refer to a far away place or to a remote age. It is a quality of life beginning here and now, a way of living for any world. It comes into the soul from above. It is "of God." It has a divine origin. It is like another "birth" that inaugurates life on a totally new level, as different from Adam-life as that is from plant life. But it forever attaches to the soul's response to Christ. It is bound up with the attitude of *faith:* "As many as received him to them gave he power to become sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John I. 12).

This, again, is not theory; it is not theology. It is experience. Whoever "John" was — and

I presume we shall never solve the mystery — he had seen with his eyes, had heard with his ears, and had handled with his hands the Word of Life. Either outwardly or inwardly he had lain "breast to breast with God." "Of his fullness" he had "received" and "grace upon grace." His own life had "received" incomes from beyond the margin of himself and had leaped to the new level. Eternal life was already a fact and no more needed proving than the Ægean sunshine did. "He that believeth *is* already begotten of God." "Faith *is* the victory." "He that believeth *hath* eternal life." "He that believeth hath the witness in himself."

Salvation, in the Johannine interpretation, is the realization of a divine-human life. "To be saved" means "to be of God." It is not merely a heightened natural life; not a life that has become refined and improved by the weeding away of the coarse and gross qualities. It is rather conceived as an inward, spiritual process, moving in two directions; God imparting himself, and man appropriating him. The discovery of God, or better our consciousness that he has come to us and is giving his life to us, is our opportunity of "birth," and the conscious opening of our life to his life *is* the birth. In a natural birth there

is no choosing, no willing. We are *pushed* into life. But no spiritual step can be of that sort. A spiritual "birth" involves a choice. There must be a voluntary opening of the life to God. The human self does not and cannot realize all it means. He knows at the moment of his birth-choice hardly more of the potential riches of the spiritual life in God than the new-born child knows of the significance and depth of mother-love when he smiles his first smile back in response to her joyous face bent over him. But both have passed a crisis in which there has been the hatching of a new self, capable now of unlimited expansion. It would be impossible from the nature of the case, to *describe* the "birth from above," for it is not a describable event. No free choice in a human life can be described. The things that can be described belong to an organized natural system, and we need not look there for the *free* or the *spiritual.* They simply cannot be there. They are "events" that can be known only as inward, private experiences, to be told only in symbol, or suggested in typical language. "The wind bloweth where it listeth," "so is every one born of the Spirit." This symbol of the wind is significant, for the wind is peculiarly that which is free and indescribable, and when the words were

used the wind was supposed to be of all physical things most free and unpredictable.

His own figure of "the Door" is doubly significant. It is a door that swings both ways. Through it God comes to men; through it men go to God. John's "Way" to the divine life, his method of a divine-human life, cannot be clearly grasped unless we first realize that for him Christ is God humanly manifested, a Person in whom Divine Life expressed itself. Christ makes real the supreme fact that Divinity and humanity belong together, and he shows them together, not in a "double personality" but in a single harmonious self-conscious life. The question of human salvation on this level is merely the question of partaking of Christ and so of God. There is manifestly a "divine giving," but there can be no effectual salvation, no spiritually new nature until there is a "human taking." It involves no loss of personality, no abandonment of selfhood; that is to say, the self is not merged into a nameless absolute, "fusing all the skirts of self," nor does a foreign will invade one's domain of inner life. Personality remains, but it is a personality conscious of its divine environment, conscious that its life is in God, and a personality that chooses to will the divine will. It

is as though there were a *conscious* Ocean with *conscious* inlets opening out of it. The inlet may have its defined self-life, but it may open its seaside to the Ocean with its infinite currents. The fresh water of the land may flow out toward the deep sea and the tides of a measureless water may sweep in to sweeten this shallow inlet. The inlet is in the Ocean and the Ocean is in the inlet! But one is blundering when he attempts to illustrate by physical things a spiritual condition. It can be done only in parabolic fashion so that a spiritual insight catches the suggestion.

This method has been followed, in a most profound way, in the Vine-passage (John XV. 1–10). The illustration points first of all to a necessity for a vital relationship between Christ and the individual. The branch is a branch only because it is in the vine. It is not merely in a close approximation to the vine-stock. Its life is in the vine. It shares the vine-life. They are, in short, not two things but one. The vine is a vine because it has branches, and the branches are branches because they are in a vine. The same sap is in them all. Their life is a common life. Branch and vine are organic to each other. Incorporation is here made the condition of spiritual living, and the condition as well of the manifesta-

tion of the fruits of the spiritual life. But the figure carries us far beyond the mere fact of a vital union between solitary individuals and the Divine Life-source. It takes us over into an organic spiritual society, which is the ultimate goal of the divine-human life both for Paul and John. This organic society is implicated in the very nature of the spiritual life as it is presented in the Fourth Gospel. It is a life of giving and receiving, a life of inter-relation, a life of incorporation, so that finally the believer partakes of God and is himself in God. But the moment there are two such believers the two lives have immediate spiritual relationship; they are two branches in the same vine. We slide, in the original narrative, almost unconsciously out of the figurative language into the direct "commandment," "that ye love one another as I have loved you." Love here and everywhere *is* the realized union of spiritual beings in an organic society. The two commandments are after all only one: "abide in Christ," and "love." By doing either, one does both.

But the very heart of the teaching on the divine-human organic society is reached in Christ's prayer (John XVII). One may note how far he has traveled beyond the selfish and competitive

basis of human society in the words: "all mine are thine, and thine are mine" (vs. 10). But the sacred refrain of the prayer is, "that they all may be one." The oneness here sought is made definite in character by the words, "even as we are one." There could be no more definite statement than this that Christ, as John reports him, outlines for his followers a divine-human life like his own. "I in them, thou in me"—that is the ultimate spiritual attainment for an individual; but the prayer draws the wider results which, from the nature of the case, flow out of such an attainment, viz., "that they may be made perfect in one" (vs. 23). This is the Divine event to which the entire Christ-revelation moves.

Dante, at the summit of his celestial journey, sees the saints of all centuries, as the petals of a mighty rose, forming one consummate flower with God himself for center. Nothing could better express the truth of the coöperative, organic spiritual life. It is union of differentiated selves, and a differentiation in realized unity, and it is a union which is formed by a divine life-relationship — "I in them; thou in me; one in us."

This chapter deals only with one short period of Christian life. If it were possible to review other periods of high-tide experience, we should

find similar results — expansion of personality, release of energy, heightened joy, increased spaciousness of mind, intensified love and new marching power. It turns out always that inner life cannot be severed from outer life. There can be no great interior life, with its deeps and heights, without a losing of self in the tasks of a needy human world, and there can be no great human service which does not flow out of an inner life that has Alpine heights and deeps to it. Christ ministers to both the outer and the inner, because he is King of a Kingdom in which both the individual and the social group are essential elements and without the perfection of both factors neither one can reach its goal.

It is profoundly true, as the aged Simeon finely foresaw, that in him "the thoughts of many hearts" have been revealed. He of a truth knew what was in man! He opens our inner lives and discovers them to ourselves, and he is the dynamic through which we can become an effective creative force in the making of the world that is to be.

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